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The six days of creation

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THE  
✓ SIX DAYS OF CREATION;  
OR,  
THE SCRIPTURAL COSMOLOGY,  
WITH THE ANCIENT IDEA OF  
TIME - WORLDS,  
IN DISTINCTION FROM  
WORLDS IN SPACE.

✓  
By TAYLER LEWIS,  
PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN UNION COLLEGE.

Βασιλεία πάντων τῶν αἰώνων.—Psalms, cxlv, 13—1 Tim. i, 17.

Fide intelligimus aptata esse **SECU**LA Verbo Dei, ut ex invisibilibus visibilia fierent.

By faith we understand that the **AGES** were framed by the Word of God, so that from **THINGS UNSEEN** came forth the things that **DO APPEAR**.—Hebrews, xi, 3.  
*Old Greek, Syriac, and Latin Versions.*

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TO

Howard Crosby,

GREEK PROFESSOR

IN THE NEW-YORK UNIVERSITY,

THIS WORK

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

*In Testimony*

OF THE AUTHOR'S REGARD FOR HIM

AS A PERSONAL FRIEND AND CONSERVATIVE SCHOLAR:

AS WELL AS

IN REMEMBRANCE OF

HIS HIGHLY USEFUL POSITION AS

PRESIDENT

OF THE YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

OF THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.



## P R E F A C E.

---

CREATION in its six timed aspect has lately called forth several able and valuable works. Almost all of these may be said to view the subject from what may be called the scientific side. Their object is to reconcile, in some way, the statements in Genesis with an assumed scientific scheme. Hence even the theologians among them are content with what may be deemed a *possible* interpretation. Their argument runs thus: The Bible *may* have this sense; it *must* have this sense to be consistent with acknowledged science; and, therefore, on the principle that all truth must be consistent with other truth, it actually *has* this sense. The reasoning is correct; the conclusion comes logically from the premises; but it is not satisfactory because it is felt to rest, not primarily, but only subordinately, on the Bible itself.

The author thinks that he can truly claim that this is the first attempt to discuss the whole question, at any length, from the Scriptural or philological side. Such an assertion might seem unjust towards the pious and able men who have of late defended the twenty-four hour hypothesis, but with them too, the exegetical is far from being the predominant element, especially as regards

the numerous other passages that have a bearing on the account in Genesis. These writers also have their assumption, and their reasoning from it is simply an inversion of the method of argument pursued by their scientific antagonists. They take as indisputable a certain interpretation which they choose to call the literal. Modern science does not agree with this; therefore, science, they say, is false in its deductions, and infidel in its spirit. We greatly honor these latter writers for their devotion to the Scriptures; we are heartily with them on that higher and all-superseding question of the absolute infallibility of the Divine Word; but we cannot endorse their interpretation.

The leading design of the present book is so fully stated in the introductory chapter, that we need only, in this place, refer very briefly to a few queries that might be supposed to arise in the mind of the reader. If the work is philological, it might be said, why is there so much of what might be called metaphysical reasoning? What need of such a labored disquisition on language? We reply: The object, as is frequently said in the work itself, is to get the right hermeneutical *stand-point*. When this has been lost or obscured, through change in the mode of thinking or conceiving, it may require much and close discussion to regain it, although the old position may once have been plain to the plainest minds. How labored must have been the effort to give to one in the days

of Abraham the views of modern science in regard to the space aspect of the kosmos! How equally, if not more difficult to divest our minds of the prejudices as well as enlargement that science brings with it, and get back to the primitive conception, in which, as we think is shown in this work, the time idea was so predominant over that of space magnitude! And yet this is the only position for a fair and unwarped interpretation. We must get back into the early time, the early feeling, the early phenomenal conceptions then living powers in words whose roots have, indeed, come down to us, but withered, sapless, obsolete, their freshness gone, their young pictorial bloom long since departed. And here we would especially ask the reader's attention to the argument in the first chapters on the difference between the fact and its phenomenal representation in language. Abstract as it may appear, we deem it vital to the whole discussion.

The frequent use of Hebrew words will present no impediment to the general reader, whilst to the scholar they are deemed indispensable. In many chapters they are the very matters discussed, and could not have been avoided. To have given them in Roman letters would have been no better for the one class of readers, whilst it would have been a very imperfect mode of representation for the other. Indulgence is also asked here for some few errors that escaped notice on account of the minuteness of the types.

Certain Hebrew words, such as *olam*, *olamim*, etc., have been transferred, and treated as current terms in our own language. It was thought there was no better way to take off the mind from the inadequate modern conception, and make the reader familiar with that remarkable plurality, or world-sense, which is so much covered up in our continual translation by an abstract pictureless adjective. It would have been far better, we think, for the growth of Biblical knowledge in the common mind, had more of these old Hebrew time-words, and along with them such terms as Sheol, and the Divine names, Elohim, El Olam, El Shaddai, El Elioun, etc., been transferred directly into our common English version. They would long ere this have become naturalized. The spirit of the word, which is ever strongly attached to its old body, would have come down with it. Instead of being broken through the use of varying representatives in different passages, its *whole* primary meaning with its *one* phenomenal or metaphysical image would have appeared in all its connections with other words, and thus produced an effect more forcible, as well as more truthful, than the inadequate vehicles we have employed for these very ancient and peculiar ideas. In respect to translations of Greek and Latin quotations, the principle adopted has been to give them in every case except where the substance would plainly appear, either in the context, or in the manner of introduction.

There are doubtless positions taken in the present work that may be regarded as assailable. Some of these the writer feels confident of being able to defend against any attack. On the strength of others he has less reliance. What will most startle some readers, perhaps, is the manner of connecting the Platonic ideas with the "unseen" entities mentioned by the Apostle, and from which "we understand by faith were made the things that do appear." But here we would ask the special attention of all thoughtful minds, and that too from the strongest conviction that the view presented does contain a most substantial verity. God makes *types*, and nature *prints* them. He made nature, too, and taught her to do her handy-work; and thus it is through the Word of the Lord she is ever bringing out the "unseen" in the phenomenal, ever causing to *appear* the *unum in multis*, the *one* type in its *many* impressions as they present themselves in the manifold leaves of her varied book, the one spermatic word in its many specific utterances, the one ancient generic power in its many individual manifestations; and so of all the original physical entities that God created. In no part of the argument does the author feel more confident of maintaining himself on the soundest philosophy, the truest science, and the most unforced interpretation of Holy Scripture.

One thing, however, he can truly say. The great question has not been carelessly or crudely treated.

The chief study of two years has been devoted to it. Every part of the Bible having any reference to creation has been carefully examined, not only in the Hebrew, but in the three Oldest Versions. Importance has been attached to these, not so much in the light of critical helps, as for their furnishing the best medium through which to study the conceptions that ever accompanied certain words in the ancient mind. Let any one carefully observe the force of the plural forms and world-senses of the great time-words in the Syraic, Septuagint, and Vulgate Versions, as well as in the Jewish Targums, and he will need no other argument to convince him that the author has not overrated the aid they truly afford in the discussion of this question. For a similar reason has he resorted to the Apocryphal Books, to the Koran, to whatever fragments he could find of the Samaritan, or of the Coptic as evidence of the old Egyptian. I search of the same idea, too, he has gone to the remains of the Gothic translation of Ulfilas, as the oldest version in a language nearest related to our own.

The work is, therefore, presented to the public with the hope, which the writer trusts it is no breach of modesty to express, that even those who may regard his main positions as yet resting in uncertainty, will concede that in other respects he has made some contribution to our Biblical literature.

UNION COLLEGE, May 10, 1855.



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## CHAPTER I.

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### INTRODUCTION.

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#### LEADING DESIGN AND LEADING IDEAS.

THE Leading Design of the following work is to set forth the Biblical Idea of Creation, philologically ascertained, or "*Creation as Revealed*," in distinction from any scientific or inductive theory of the Earth. It is impossible altogether to divest the mind of associations and suggestions coming from the latter source; neither would a fair interpretation require such an ignoring of modern discoveries, whether real or pretended. The writer, however, can truly say, that every effort has been made to prevent the mind being warped into a forced interpretation by the influence of any such outside ideas. In such an effort, it is possible he may have gone, or tended at least, to the other extreme, and sometimes excluded scientific suggestions where they were fairly entitled to consideration, in determining the true meaning of this most mysterious account of the world's origin. But we must have an honest faith, or none at all. It is a wretched self-deception, when we fancy we have a belief grounded on the Scriptures, which after all rests for its main support on Buckland, or Lyell, or Hugh Miller. The thought ever present to the writer's mind, has been—what do the Scriptures teach us of Creation? Such teaching is for

him as a believer the unquestionable reality, never to be surrendered but with Revelation itself, and that whole vast field of moral and religious truth so intimately connected with its literal verity. Until he is prepared to make this sacrifice, he must hold that the record in Genesis is a true account of the matters and facts therein set forth. He would say, too, that there are no philological views that he would not in a moment surrender, if he could feel that they led to a forced and unnatural interpretation. If the twenty-four hour hypothesis is the one, and the only one, that comes from a faithful and exact exegesis of the Sacred Words, he must accept it in spite of any difficulties of science ; he must believe, — as faith is often required to do, — against appearances however striking, or reasonings however plausible. And he would not be irrational in so doing. The one class of truths is so immensely above the other — the consequences of the rejection of the one, or of any view that sheds darkness upon them, are so much more momentous, that we cannot think of their being placed in one balance, or treated as of equal authority. We can get along very well without geology ; our intellectual and moral dignity would not have been impaired had no such science ever existed. But where are we without Revelation ; and where is Revelation, if the very initial record of Man, and of the Earth, turns out to be all false, a lying legend — a work of fancy, or of designed deception ?

Whatever, therefore, the Scriptures teach, whatever is the fair meaning of those ancient writings to which JESUS the Light — the only Light of the world — gave the sanction of his authority, that is, for us as believers, the truth wherever it may lead us. “ *The grass withereth, the*



*flower fadeth*"—nature comes and goes, her laws are ever presenting new aspects, science is ever changing its theories and its language, its most plausible inductions have been often shown to be false—"but the Word of our God shall stand forever." It is the record of salvation, with which we cannot dispense without lying down like animals in the dust, and confessing that our highest good is sensuality, our highest knowledge the profitless study of a mere material nature—of an ever changing, ever perishing world, whose beginning is in a cloud which no science can hope to penetrate, over whose end hangs thick darkness, and whose design—moral or physical—is an enigma which has baffled, and must forever baffle, all earthly or merely human philosophy.

It is several years since the writer sat down to study this question solely from the light of the Divine Word, determined that no geological considerations, on the one hand, and no irrational independence of science, on the other, should deflect his enquiries from their true exegetical course. In a very early stage of the investigation he became persuaded that we are in danger of putting modern notions on very ancient language, and that the idea of vast indefinite periods was most in accordance with the spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures. The result has been most satisfactory to his own mind, and he wishes, therefore, to present it to the reader with the hope that it may be productive of the same conviction.

Such is the Leading Design. The *Leading Ideas* may be briefly presented in the following epitome:

1st. (Revelation is independent of science.) It reveals natural as well as moral truth, but in a manner and by a method peculiar to itself. Its object is not to state or

endorse any scientific theory. Such endorsement a true Revelation from its very nature can never give, for the very conclusive reason that no inductive theory ever has been, or probably ever will be, so absolutely perfect, or free from error, as to need no amendment.

2d. Revelation, therefore, uses its own language; This is not the scientific, or the language of natural causality, as it is employed to set forth the relations of cause and effect in their mediate dependencies. It is not the philosophical, or the language through which there are supposed to be exhibited the reason, the necessity, or the occasions of the creative energy, irrespective of its particular sequences. It is not the metaphysical, dealing alone with ideas, laws and forces regarded from a higher plane than the natural. It is not the poetical, except as used for occasional illustration, and in connections in which the marks of the poetic character are not easily mistaken. In distinction from all these, the language of the Bible, in setting forth the creative acts, or other natural or cosmical truths, is strictly *phenomenal*; that is, it takes as representative of the remote energy—remote either in time, or causal sequence, or both—those last phenomena or *appearances* through which these remote energies finally manifest themselves directly to the senses, and which are, therefore, the same for all ages and all men—never varying like the language of science or philosophy, but as uniform and unchanging as God has made the laws of the human senses to which they are addressed. These ultimate appearances or “*the things that are seen,*” thus furnish the *name* to the *unseen* ultimate causality, or the remote creative energy they represent as its last outward result. Thus, in phe-

nominal language, to make the *firmament*, is to bring into being, and into action, that system or series of *physical* law, or laws, which terminates in the manifestation so named, and so also used as the common phenomenal name of its causality, however much or however little of that causality may be scientifically known in its chain of sequences.

3d. Although it is not the aim of the work to reconcile revelation with science, or with any scientific language, still, on the other hand, and in opposition to a very common view, is it maintained that (the Bible may be, in some respects, designed to teach us natural and not merely moral truth.) The Scripture professes to reveal those great facts in the natural and supernatural history of our world that are most intimately connected with our moral destiny, and which are of such a kind that, without Revelation, man could never know them at all. And yet in doing this, it never pretends to give the science or philosophy of such facts. In other words, — the Bible, rightly interpreted, and its meaning fairly ascertained, is of authority in whatever it professes to teach us of the natural world, whenever that teaching is direct, or where it is the main truth conveyed in the passage, and cannot be regarded as subordinate to something else, either by way of impression or illustration.

4th. Creation is an alternating series of *growths* or *natures* — both words meaning the same thing, and entering radically, or in their etymological conception, into the main terms employed in the early languages to denote origin, or the *genesis* of actual being. These growths, or natures, have each a supernatural beginning, without which the first could never have commenced, or the

second have ever developed the third, or, in general, any previous one could ever, by any law given to it, have risen above a fixed maximum, although without such divine interposition, it might, and would, in time, degenerate, or fall below its original measure. These supernatural beginnings, followed by natural growths, constitute the chronological periods of the divine working, of which there are *six* mentioned by Moses as having a direct relation to the birth or genesis of our own world, in its present formation.

5th. These creative periods are indefinite, or of a duration not measurable by any subordinate divisions of time derived from the present settled constitution of things. They are called days for three reasons: 1st. Because this is the best language the Hebrew or any other ancient tongue could furnish—any other word by which we should attempt to denote period or cycle being resolvable ultimately into the same idea that lies at the root of this first and simplest term of revolution: 2d. Because of its cyclical or periodical character: and, 3d. Because this periodical character is marked by two contrasted states which could not be so well expressed in any way as by those images that in all the early tongues enter into the terms for evening and morning.

6th. This, it is contended, is not mere fanciful conjecture, or a philological resort to escape a difficulty of science, but is forced upon us by considerations which lie upon the very face of the account, especially in the description of the first four periods which preceded the regular division of days by the sun. By representing them as ante-solar, the writer, whatever may have been his science, gives us a clear intimation that the days of

which he is speaking are not the common diurnal revolutions measured by the rising and setting of the heavenly bodies. It is certainly not the *common* day in its *more essential* as well as striking characteristic of the solar division. There is, therefore, much more reason, and a more consistent license in regarding it as not a *common* day in the *less essential* and less striking characteristic of a twenty-four hours duration. The reader's attention is specially requested to this part of the argument, and the philological investigations connected with it. The days were anomalous; the first night was utterly indefinite; the first morning, at least, was unlike any that is now made by the sun. This admitted,—and it is forced upon us by the whole aspect of the account,—the whole narration is anomalous, and a *sufficient intimation* is given that the times and periods are to be interpreted in consistent analogy with the extraordinary acts. In other words, the extraordinary in *duration*, as well as in other aspects of these wondrous days, is rather to be expected *a priori* than regarded as a forced resort to avoid a scientific difficulty.

7th. The key-note, or the suggestive thought that pervades the whole argument, comes from the distinction which is believed to exist, between the language of Paul, Hebrews xi. 3, and that of the Mosaic account in Genesis;—the one referring to the *essential*, the other to the *phenomenal*,—the one addressed to the faith apprehending directly, without sense and without induction, the invisible divine powers or the unseen forces from which are made *the things that are seen*, the other addressed to the sense, or rather to the faith *through* the sense, and making use of the *things that are seen*

as the names or representatives of the primal invisible entities that are not only far removed from the senses, but away back of science itself and its most interior discoveries,—*ab omni scientia, tum sensus tum mentis cum ratione cognitionis, quam longissime remota.*

8th. An important aid in interpreting the days in Genesis, or the creative times, is derived from a right view of the Hebrew *olam*, and the Greek *αἰών*, as they so frequently occur in the Old and New Testaments. A chapter is devoted to their thorough examination. These terms show that there existed in the earliest use of language, a conception of durations transcending any of the ordinary divisions of time as measured by the heavenly phenomena. They indicate a view of the universe as extending indefinitely back and forward in time, however limited may have been the knowledge or notion of its magnitude in space. The manner in which they are often employed suggests the idea of immense ages in the past as well as in the future, and that, too, not as mere blank conceptions of the mind, but as being as much a part of God's eternal kingdom as our own *secular* period or world-duration. Hence the present world, too, is called an *olam*, or *æon*, regarded as one of the series among these mighty epochs, and as measured by its outward relation to them, instead of the subdivisions of time that fall within its temporal limits. From this Hebrew notion of *olam* comes, in the New Testament, the common, yet remarkable, use of *αἰών* (*ævum*) as a name even for the material world viewed in its time instead of its space aspect, or as chronological instead of extended being,—a usage of the word which is never met with in classical Greek. Hence in the epistle to the Hebrews, i. 2, and

xi. 3, as well as in other passages, the very objects of the creative acts are thus set forth by words of duration—“*By whom also he made the worlds,*” τοῖς αἰῶνας—the æons, the ages, as denoting a higher aspect of the work and more truly the essence of its result than any words of space. This Hebrew conception of olams, or of worlds under that name, is in striking contrast with the modern notion that five or six thousand years carries us back, not only to the beginning of the human race, but to the absolute beginning of all created substance with nothing before it—if we except the solitary divine existence—but an eternal blank.

The views here brought out may strike some readers as new, and the writer might be tempted to make a claim for them of originality. This, however, he would regard as rather an equivocal merit in the interpretation of the Bible. It is hoped that they will commend themselves more by their philological correctness, and by their sober analogy with the whole spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Among Collateral Topics the following may be mentioned as most worthy of introductory notice :

1st. *The institution of the solar Sabbath as a standing memorial of the termination of the creative work, or that Great Rest of God which commenced in the evening, at the close of the sixth day, and yet continues uninterrupted and unbroken.* The Sabbatical institution is thought to furnish an argument against the doctrine of indefinite days. It is maintained, on the other hand, that there is a sublime fitness in the less being thus made the type or memorial of the greater, the transient of the

permanent, and the diurnal of the *olamic* or *æonian* periods. It is thus in analogy with the general spirit of the Hebrew typical institutions, and especially as manifested in the widening and ascending series of Jewish hebdomads.

2d. *The question, whether the first vegetable and animal productions were made perfect, or grew from a seed; and whether the seed itself was created in its finished material form, or came from a seminal force, or principle, divinely originated, and then developed by the already existing nature of the previous period. The language of Scripture is here carefully examined, and special attention is given to the enquiries—What is meant when it is said “God created the plant before it was in the earth?”—Can there be a real creation of a force or principle, antecedent to, and independent of, the material form in which it is to be manifested to the senses? In other words, what is meant, or is anything meant, when we say with Plato, that “God is the maker or architect of laws and ideas.*

3d. The cyclical law of nature, or the *nature of all natures*, great or small—the flower, the tree, the world, the individual, the species, the genus,—or that law of maxima and minima, of growth and decay, which makes it impossible that there should be any uninterrupted or unlimited progress in nature without a continual series of supernatural interpositions, originating higher and higher stages—thus causing the creative ongoing to consist of periods with their contrasted morning and evening, their torpid and energising, their quiescent and reviving states.



4th. The Physical Origin of Man, and what is meant by his being formed from the dust of the earth.

5th. The manner in which the Mosaic account appears in the Greek cosmogonies.

6th. The Hebrew Idea of the great antiquity of the world, as shown by a particular examination of Proverbs viii, 22–32, together with parallel passages in Job and the Psalms.

7th. The Hebrew or Bible Ideas of Law and Nature.

8th. The Poetical Language of the Bible and the difference between it and what may be called the narrative phenomenal style, as illustrated by a comparison of Genesis i, with the thirty-eighth chapter of Job.

It may be remarked generally in conclusion, that as the writer has aimed to be wholly philological in the examination of these great questions, he has not been much concerned with, or anxious about, the enquiry, whether the results at which he has arrived would square with any geological theory or not. There may be a general or a partial harmony. The great succeeding periods of light, atmosphere, separation of land and water, vegetable, animal, and rational life, may correspond in their general outlines to what science is supposed to teach, whilst, as far as her very defective evidence goes, there may be an apparent overlapping in the minor details or filling up of the great scheme. If our earth is a *growth*, φύσις, *natura*, γένεσις, *toleda*, or *generation*,—the Greek, Latin, Anglo-Saxon, and Hebrew words, meaning radically the same thing—then the mind could almost determine *a priori*, from general analogy, that it would be by ascending steps from the

lower degrees of organic existence to the higher orders of life ; and that notwithstanding some appearances of intermingling, such would be the general chronological outline. Hence, too we might expect that the *number* of the great creative acts, each with its two contrasted times, its supernatural *awakening* and its sequence of natural *repose*, or, in short, *order of succession*, instead of *extent of duration*, would constitute the essential feature of the facts revealed.

The chief, and as we think the strong position is, that the Bible does not teach that the creative days were twenty-four hours long ; but leaves a great latitude in this respect, determining nothing about their duration, except that they must be in some kind of conceived harmony with the growths and processes assigned to each. Hence this view of indefinite periods may be applied in various ways. It may be supposed to embrace the whole physical history of our earth from its earliest condition of being, or it may refer merely to the successive steps by which an old chaotic earth was renewed, and a new division of land and water, a new vegetation, a new animal life, etc., were made to succeed older growths and older creations, which had long before run through their cycles. The writer would confess his partiality for the first supposition, as the second burdens the conceptive faculty with the idea of a series of great creations, as well as of great periods in each creation ; but on either view there is no need to disjoin the introductory verse in the first of Genesis from the rest, or to suppose any disconnected interval between them. There is, however, nothing in a sound philology that would interfere with such a view if any choose to entertain it.

## CHAPTER II.

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### BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION.

IS THE BIBLE TO BE INTERPRETED AS OTHER BOOKS?—WHAT IS IT DESIGNED TO TEACH?—STYLE OF THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT OF CREATION.

THE Bible, it is often said, must be interpreted on the same principles that we apply to other books. The proposition doubtless contains a truth, and yet great care is required in its application, or we shall violate the very canon we profess to employ. We do not interpret the Bible as we would other books, unless we keep in view those very peculiarities in which it differs from other books,—unless we are affected, and greatly affected, by what we believe in respect to its author, its subject, and its end. We judge, indeed, of the style by what is apparent on the face. There are certain principles by which we determine what is poetical, what is plain narrative, what is rhetorical, what is argumentative, what is allegorical, what is mythical; but in doing so we must draw out conclusions from the record itself. We have no right to turn plain prose into poetry, or poetry into prose, or sober narrative into myth, or a parable into a mystical allegory, just to remove some real or fancied difficulty arising from extrinsic considerations. So far the rule holds good of the Bible as of other books; and yet who could deny that the mere thought of God being its author, human destiny its subject, and salvation its end,

must greatly modify our conceptions not only of the importance, but of the very meaning of what it reveals.

In this sense we cannot interpret a book of which we believe God to be the author, as we would interpret Shakspeare, Byron, or Homer. A similar remark may be made in respect to the subject and design. In the case of other books, this may often be known from without; the design of the Bible can only be determined from itself. How often do we hear it laid down, with an assurance that seems to admit of no doubt, that the Scriptures were not given to teach us this, or that? They were intended, it is said, to inculcate religion and morality, and we must not, therefore, look into them for any satisfaction in respect to the kingdom of nature. The boundaries of religion and morality, too, are narrowed or enlarged, so as to include or exclude just what such a declaimer would find convenient or inconvenient for his hypothesis. Now, without saying anything on the immense difficulty of making the distinction which some regard as so easy, or of drawing the fair line between the moral and the physical, the philosophical and the religious,—without dwelling on the absurdities into which many have run in attempting to draw this line, and the arbitrary manner in which they would place a principle on this side or that, according to their own fancy,—without showing here, as it might be shown, that some of the gravest moral truths have a physical root, or rather a physical ground, and that the highest natural truths have inseparable moral affinities, as is so fully exemplified in the great question of the *unity of the race* in its connection with the doctrines of the *fall*, of the *incarnation*, and the *redemption*,—without dwelling here on any

of these points, it is sufficient to say, that even when judged by those ordinary rules of hermeneutics to which the appeal is made, this boasted canon of the modern lecturer is nothing but sheer impertinence, a violation of all logic, and of all sound rhetoric too, in so complacently taking for granted the very matter to be investigated.

What is the Bible designed to teach us? *Just what it does teach us*, is the simple, yet only rational answer,—unless we have some extrinsic evidence, (and this, of course, could be nothing else than some other assumed revelation,) informing us more expressly what that design is, and pointing out to us what parts may be rejected, or modified, or referred to some lower collateral purpose, without affecting or changing the great object.

Assuming for our readers that the first chapters of Genesis are divine Scripture, the question arises—Did its Divine Author intend by it to give some instruction, be it more or less limited, in respect to the fact and manner of the origin of our earth? Was it meant to teach us its direct and sudden formation, or its gradual growth into its present state, or the combination of both kinds of causality in producing the grand result? Was it intended for any reasons, whether we can discover them or not, to give us a lesson in respect to the natural as well as the moral world? Now, we can only determine this from the record itself. What does it teach? That ascertained, we have just what it was designed to teach. But in getting at it, we must, of course, use all the laws of interpretation, ordinary or extraordinary, which the case demands. We must not suffer any outward difficulties, which modern science may have suggested, to deflect us from the fair meaning, or refract its direct

light ; and yet we must allow those difficulties their full and proper effect in causing us to examine more carefully whether some other prepossessions, scientific or unscientific, may not have drawn us as much away into errors lying in a different or even opposite direction. May it not be that we are judging a record made for all ages, by certain scholastic notions of comparatively modern centuries,—notions which, although at their first introduction lying as much out of the common track as those scientific views that now arouse our jealousy, have become, in time, so much the property of the common mind as to make it now very difficult for us to think, or reason, or interpret language out of them. We had better lock up our Bibles at once, than be haunted with the uneasy and tormenting conviction that our belief is the untenable result of any forced or compromising accommodation. And yet, on the other hand, we must not be too certain that our *prima facie* impressions are the only ones that will bear the test of close examination. Our ideas of sudden creations out of nothing, whether true or false, would have been very strange to many Gentile Christians of the first centuries. The doctrine of rapid causalities crowded into brief periods measured by our common hours, would have been more out of their way of thinking, and even of interpreting the Scriptures, than that of instantaneous production from previous non-entity ; it would have seemed to them neither nature, nor miracle, nor a credible combination of both. The very name *Genesis*, given in the Greek version of the Old Testament, contains the conception of *growth*, of *generation*, of the *becoming* of one thing from another through physical forces operating through certain traceable me-

thods that may be called physical laws, and is not only in harmony with, but would demand the long periods, which geology is supposed to suggest. In proof of this, we may say that some early Christian Fathers embraced this idea of the indefinite times, as the true and most natural interpretation, ages before geology, as a science, was even dreamed of. This was their view of the *dies eternitatis*, as they are called by some one of them, and which is the most literal rendering of the Hebrew expression, as it is employed by the Prophet Micah, v, 1, to denote the “*outgoings*” of the Logos, or The Everlasting Creative Wisdom.

But what is the fair meaning of the record? This ascertained to his satisfaction, the Christian believer in revelation can have no farther question. This ascertained, and he has what God meant to teach, and which is reverently to be received as his teaching, whatever other issues science or philosophy may seem to present. We need not dwell on the propositions now become so trite, that all truth must be consistent with other truth — that is only saying that all truth must be true, — or that one of God’s books must not contradict the other, — all that is so, of course. These positions which once seemed to embody so much wisdom, are now too stale to be either formally defended or opposed. The question still remains, and a very important one it is — Which book is of the most value to us? Which book most needs the aid of the other as the interpreter, not of its phenomena, but of its ultimate meaning? Which book contains the truths with which we can least dispense, or that have the most important bearing upon our most serious destiny? Let all confidence in a present revelation be

destroyed, and with it, as an inevitable consequence, all hope of any future revelation of God to man, and how long would science or philosophy continue to give us any moral or religious light? How long before the one would become but "a valley of dry bones," and the other, as it has always been in itself and away from the influence of the Bible, a *terra umbrarum*, a region of the shadow of death? Of course, God's books will not contradict each other; but this should not be an excuse for ever making the Bible yield to anything we may choose to call an interpretation of nature. In place of these modern truisms, it is far more important for us to remember a saying as old as the experience of mankind, that truth lies beneath the surface,—a surface often of apparently perplexing difficulties down through which we must dig as for hid treasures, whether we are examining the strata of geology, or seeking to explore the deposits of revealed wisdom amid the obscurities inseparable from the necessary medium through which they are laid open to the human mind.

In respect to this account in Genesis, we cannot resolve it into poetry or mythus. There need be no objection to any such view had there been proof on the face of the writing. There is certainly poetry in other parts of the Bible, and the opening account might have been in the same style, designed like all other poetry, to excite strong emotion—to impress us feelingly with the thought of the wisdom and goodness and greatness of the First Cause, without claiming exact credence for the literal prosaic truth of the representations employed for such an emotional purpose. But the opening narrative of the Bible has not the air and style of poetry, although the



subsequent Hebrew poets have drawn largely upon this old store house of grand conceptions, and thereby thrown back upon it something of a poetical tinge. Neither is it mythical or parabolical. We have no difficulty in detecting these styles in the Scriptures, wherever they may occur. When we meet with such a passage as this — “The trees once said to the bramble, rule thou over us,” — or, “Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt and planted it,” — or, “My beloved had a vineyard in a very fruitful hill,” — or, “A sower went forth to sow, and as he sowed some seed fell by the way-side” — we have no trouble in determining its character. Every intelligent reader, whether learned in the original languages or not, says at once, if he understands the terms, this is myth, — this is parable, — this is allegory, — this is poetical or figurative language. We fail to detect any of these well-known marks of style in the account of the creation. It professes to narrate the order of facts, or the chronological steps, in the production of our present earth. It is found in scriptures well known to have existed in our Saviour’s day, — scriptures with which He was familiar, which He styled holy, and to which He, the Light of the world, appealed as of divine, and therefore, unerring authority. Whatever, then, be its fair meaning, that meaning, we say again, is for the believer the actual truth, the actual fact or facts, the actually intended teaching; and is to be received as such in spite of all impertinent distinctions between the natural and the moral, or any arbitrary fancies in respect to what does or does not fall within the design of a divine revelation.

## CHAPTER III.

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### PHENOMENAL LANGUAGE.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS,—THE FACT, THE CONCEPTION, THE EMOTION, THE PHILOSOPHY.—GOD CAN MAKE A REVELATION TO US ONLY THROUGH OUR CONCEPTIONS.—ALL HUMAN SPEECH PHENOMENAL.—THIS ESPECIALLY TRUE OF THE EARLIEST LANGUAGES.

As actual fact, we have said,—But here come in distinctions on which we must be allowed to dwell at some length, even at the hazard of being thought to indulge in abstract and irrelevant theorising, or in what may seem to some, unnecessary repetitions. The course taken, however, is deemed vital to the whole discussion. The analysis here attempted will give the key to all subsequent interpretations, and if well understood by the reader, will, it is hoped, make those interpretations not only easy but convincing.

We commence then with four distinctions, although they may be afterwards mainly reduced to two. Matter of fact is one thing; the conception, or mind's image accompanying that fact, and which may be taken as directly representative of it, is another thing; the emotion to which it may give rise is a third; and the philosophy or science of that fact still another and a fourth thing. There might, perhaps, be made a farther distinction between the science and the philosophy—the one having respect to the mutual relations of the phenomena by which the fact may be represented, the other its relations to the whole of being—but the above is sufficient for our present

argument. For example — the sun rises. The fact or ultimate act, which the phenomenon or appearance represents, is the same for the ordinary observer, the man of science and the poet. But the second has a philosophy of the matter to which the first and third may be strangers; the third has an emotion of which the others perhaps know little or nothing. Now both the philosophy and the appearance, or mode of conception, be it more or less vivid, will affect the verbal language in which the fact is presented, unless the philosopher chooses for the sake of convenience to rest in the common language, although correcting for himself its etymological conceptions, and the poet thinks it already sufficiently possessed, as it may be, of the figurative element. And this to some extent it will always doubtless have; for in reality the thought of the fact, as a fact, is never wholly separate from some true or false scientific view, or from some emotion, be it strong or feeble, accompanying the manner in which such fact is conceived, or representatively imaged to the mind.

Now this conception, or mind's image of the fact, in distinction from and as representative of the fact itself, is what language, especially early or primitive language, ever aims to express; and if God reveals facts to us, or the order of facts, through language, it is no irreverence to say that he employs the instrument as he finds it. We can imagine no other way. Even were the revelation intuitional, as some demand it should be, it would still be only by awakening in the soul, without verbal language, that same conceptional image which had given birth to the language. For language is a medium to the soul only as the soul hath generated it either by its ordi-

nary powers, or as quickened by an early divine influence operating through them and upon them. Thus all thoughts, all feelings, all facts have gone through its imaging process, and thus alone become capable of any outward representation. Away from such direct or reflex images, the soul could not read her own intuitions, whether regarded as innate or inspired; and should there be in either way (that is by our own thinking or by inspiration) an attempt to create within us new conceptions, it could only be by beginning with those older ones that lie nearest the direct action of the senses. It will be borne in mind that we are now speaking of physical facts, and not at all of moral truth. Such facts, in their ultimate state ineffable and inconceivable, can only come to us as represented by phenomena, and if God would talk to us either by articulate speech, or through emotions and conceptions directly inspired, he must come, with all reverence be it said, where we are; unless he would take us up as Paul was taken, to the Third Heaven, and then the language employed would be not only unintelligible but unutterable in the world below.

Let us suppose that the Deity designed to reveal to a human mind, and through that human mind to other human minds, that on a certain occasion there was a preternatural lengthening of the day. The phenomenon or appearance connected with the physical agency or supernatural act, (whichever it was,) and representative of such act or agency, is that of the sun's standing immovable in the firmament. This is that appearance to the senses, in which the act or agency terminates, and aside from which the one to whom it is revealed cannot conceive it. It stands for the fact and is in this sense to him, the lan-

guage of the fact, just as the articulate descriptive words represent, or are to other minds the language of, the phenomenon itself. If God speaks to him it must be in his own language, or if he inspires the thought of the fact in his mind, it must be through his own modes of conceiving. Is it said that Deity might correct the human conceptions of phenomena and bring them nearer to the actual truth? Two answers at once suggest themselves: One is that it would be useless, as the great object is to communicate the fact, and any way through which that is done suffices. Secondly, any new language would still be phenomenal, and any new phenomenal conception, or conceptions, would still have more or less of that disagreement between them and the remote physical or divine agency represented, which, it could be shown, exists, and must ever exist, even in our most scientific dialect.

It might, perhaps, be objected that this is simply treating the account as poetical. But there is a wide difference between what is ordinarily called poetry, (in which the design is to connect strong *emotion* with the *conception*,) and that phenomenal expression, or innate spontaneous metaphor which is in the very roots of language, and is employed simply to create a vivid thought of the fact which the conception represents. This important difference we hope to present more clearly in a subsequent examination of the numerous references of the Hebrew poets to the Mosaic account of the creation.

We might say that all human speech is more or less phenomenal. It is only in the latest or worn out stages of language that words come to stand for thoughts, or facts, or physical agencies, directly without this middle

process of a representative conception, — just as  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$  in algebra stand directly for certain abstract quantities and relations. In this state it may, in some respects, be better adapted to science, whose symbols are the more convenient just in proportion to their abstractedness from all sensible conceptions; but its life is gone; its power of creating vivid images to stand as representatives of the remoter fact or truth, no longer exists. No language is wholly in such a condition of conceptual barrenness, although the later ones are ever tending towards it except so far as they are recoined from time to time by being sent to the etymological mint, or preserved fresh and bright by those writers who happily combine philological accuracy with a vivid power of imagination. Even yet our speech, old and worn out as it is, abounds in hidden metaphors. We cannot well talk without a figure. Even our most scientific and philosophical vocabularies are full of words, which, when traced to their roots, present something pictorial, some sensible *image*, or sensible *action*, as the representative basis of all more interior thought. The very sentences with which the reader is now occupied, abstract as they may seem, contain such pictures in almost every word. We acknowledge their existence more readily in terms that have come to us from the Greek and Latin sources; but a careful examination shows that even those Anglo-Saxon words whose primitive images are in a great measure lost from common use, present the same phenomenal character.

But we need not dwell on this. What is mainly had in view is the phenomenal language of Scripture, and here our formulas have their strictest application. Letters, or elements of speech, represent words or articulate

sounds ;—articulate sounds represent a sensible conception or mind's image,—this sensible conception represents a fact or facts, either near, or remote, or ultimate, standing behind it. The ultimate fact is in itself ineffable, because inconceivable under any of the forms of sense. The various conceptional representations of it may be more or less simple, or more or less scientific, but all falling short of that unutterable reality which no language can by any other means express. The earliest conception, although the most vivid and therefore the most representative, may be scientifically the most erroneous. And yet nothing would be gained by substituting other words and other images, because the most philosophical language, when examined in its roots, contains as much of this phenomenal character as that in most ordinary use. Some superficial naturalist might make himself merry with the expressions,—*the sun fails*—or goes out— or faints away,—and yet, it may be, in total ignorance of the fact that his own scientific word *eclipse* does phenomenally and etymologically present precisely that conception. Does he say that he disregards the etymology, or the phenomenal conception, or has a new phenomenal conception associated with the word, or has in his mind directly (if that were possible) the absolute fact or physical agency, without any representative sensible image ?—the enlightened reader of the Scriptures can say the same thing. He, too, may thus correct his conceptions if he deems it worth while ; or he may go right to the ultimate fact they represent, as far as his science may have shown him the way. Our superficial naturalist scoffs at Joshua's command to the sun to stand still, but even in talking about it he is using language

alike, if not equally, erroneous. Should he resolve to make an artificial word, that should have no phenomenal conceptions associated with it, or standing between it and the ultimate philosophical fact, he would not be able to find the materials of such a word, or phrase, in any dialect spoken by man. He might arbitrarily employ for that purpose some articulate sound, but it would not be strictly language. An essential stage in the process that constitutes language, has been left out, and thus it would be only a scientific symbol of the same character with the  $x$ ,  $y$  and  $z$  of the algebraist. Even should we suppose it to represent to himself his own conception, or his own notion, to use a term more applicable to the present case, still it would be only *to himself*. In explaining the meaning of his new term to others, he must inevitably fall right back into the phenomenal terms and conceptions he had discarded.

What has been said is especially true of primitive language. There everything lives, and breathes, and acts. Natural phenomena appear as the acts of living agents. Vivid images are not merely things of rhetorical choice, to be selected for purposes of ornament, or for the exciting of particular emotions, but are forced upon the writer in almost every expression he uses. His language furnishes him with no other materials. It is thus we find, when we carry ourselves back into its old life, that what is a great advantage in calling out vivid conception becomes a seeming disadvantage—but only a seeming one—in a scientific application. We sometimes blunder, too, in respect to the real force the ancient writer may have intended to give to the term he employs. We see the image in the etymology, and it becomes the main



sense to us, although it may have been already obsolete to him, notwithstanding he still employs the established language ; or else we mistake the *conception* for the fact itself, or what may be a still worse error, we treat it as we would an express metaphor in modern poetry.

## CHAPTER IV.

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### ILLUSTRATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE.

THE EXPRESSION, THE VOICE OF THE LORD.—THE HEAVEN OF HEAVENS.—THE THIRD HEAVENS.—HEBREW LANGUAGE FOR ECLIPSES OF THE SUN AND MOON.—ANTHROPOMORPHISM.—PARTS OF THE BODY, AS NAMES FOR SOUL.

THE nature of phenomenal language and the distinctions on which it is grounded,—especially as presented in the primitive tongues,—may receive illustration from some of the most familiar examples to be found in the Sacred Writings. We read Genesis iii, 8, of the “*Voice of the Lord* walking in the garden in the cool of the day.” Here is a *conceptional* term. קֹל־יְהוָה, Kol-Yehovah is the Hebrew word, or rather phrase, for thunder. Through use it may come to be employed as a single compound, and to represent the original *fact* with little or nothing remaining of the original *conception*. In Job and the Psalms it is of frequent occurrence, still retaining its primitive force, but coming to stand for the phenomenon very much as our single word, or the Greek βροντη, or the Latin *tonitru*. The reader is referred for some of the most striking examples to Psalm xxxix, 3, etc. : “The *voice of the Lord* is upon the waters; the God of glory *thundereth*; the Lord is upon the mighty waters. The *voice of the Lord* breaketh the cedars, even the cedars of Lebanon. The *voice of the Lord* calleth out the flames of fire. The *voice of the Lord* maketh the wilderness to tremble, and layeth bare the forests, whilst in His temple

men speak of His glory." Compare also Job xxxvii, 2 : "Hearken to the trembling (or rolling) of his voice, and the roaring (רָאָה) or deep loud sound, that proceedeth out of his mouth." The translators in Genesis have given the phenomenal rendering; and this is best, because the most vivid, and most true to the ancient conception. To our English ear, however, it may make the word *Lord* the subject of the participle *walking*; whereas, if taken in analogy with other places, it might be truly rendered, — "They heard the thunder going forth in the cool, (or towards the evening,) of the day." The word הִלְכָה, (translated walking) may refer, as every Hebrew scholar knows, to impersonal as well as to personal agents. It is applied to the waters of the flood, Gen. viii, 5, and to the going forth and increasing brightness of the light, Prov. iv, 18. It admirably presents the phenomenal conception attending one of those long rolls or peals of thunder that seem to traverse the whole horizon. As in Job, xxxvii, 3 : "Under the whole heaven He directeth it; After it a sound roareth when He thundereth with His glorious voice." It was like the long peal which Æschylus represents as breaking on the ear of the daring Prometheus — (1081)

βρυχία δ' ἤχῳ παραμυκάται  
βροντῆς.

It was the first thunder-storm the sinning pair had ever seen or heard, and their impious transgression gave it an awful significance. They were frightened at a phenomenon from which the guilty soul has ever since shrunk, in all ages of the world. It is the voice of the Lord yet, through however many undulating series of second causes it may reach us. Science can never completely oblite-

rate this early phenomenal conception of the human soul, and no amount of Epicúrean boasting can do away the impression, that God is indeed near to us in the thunderstorm, however distant he may seem to be in other operations of nature. It is not, however, alone to the more outward phenomena that the term (or a kindred one) is applied in the sacred language. In the description of the sublime scenes presented to the Prophet's vision-in the Mount of Horeb, it is used to denote that more interior divine power which lies back of the wind, the earthquake, and even the fire. The Lord, it is said, was in no one of these directly; but after them all comes the "still small *voice*;" or the *subtile* voice, (as  $\text{קול רעוע}$  literally means) — the attenuated, silent voice, or voice of silence. And when Elijah heard it, he "wrapped his face in his mantle and went forth and stood at the door of the cave."

As another example, we may take the sublime Hebrew declaration as presented to us in the prayer of Solomon, "The Heaven and Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Thee." Here the Divine immensity is the *fact*, or *truth*, — in itself the ineffable truth. The *conception*, on the other hand, by which the truth is represented, is that of a higher Heaven or empyrean, embracing a lower Heaven, or Heavens, which is the old Hebrew as well as Greek image of the universe. The image is itself a language. If we wish for terms more scientific or philosophical, we must either cheat ourselves with such as appear more abstract, simply because the pictures that were once in their roots have faded away, or we are compelled to take up with mere conceptionless negations, such as immensity, infinity, etc.

In the same manner may we treat the expression, *the Third Heavens*, as denoting the most transcendent state of being. The glorious ineffable fact is one thing; the language and mode of conception—itself an inner speech—form quite another thing. To make the process complete, then, there must be a double transfer. Just as we translate the Greek and Hebrew words into English words, so must we likewise translate the Hebrew image or conception into the modern conception, if we have one, whether it be furnished by science or come from the progress of the common mind. One translation is just as proper as the other, unless for the sake of its greater vividness we prefer to read the great ultimate facts of nature and God's power therein, through the old imagery, as well as in the old words themselves. Whoever thus reads, we may say, will find his account in it. The conceptions of Solomon and Paul will be found, to say the least, as favorable to elevation of thought and grandeur of emotion as any of the scientific formulas of Herschell and La Place.

Had Paul undertaken to tell us scientifically or numerically about this third Heaven,—as for example to give us the distance between it and the second, as the impostor Mohammed has done—he would have turned the conception into a fact, and made himself and the writings of which he was the inspired medium responsible for its absolute truth or falsity. But the Bible never does any thing of the kind. And here is one great difference between it and other writings with which the infidel would sometimes compare the Sacred Book. The close student cannot help being struck by it, and revering it as one of the marks of its divine origin. Our Holy

Scripture shrinks not from the boldest supernatural; but then it is ever the supernatural in all its ineffable grandeur. It never commits itself by any such change of image or *conception* into fact, as to stamp upon it that legendary appearance which no intelligent reader can mistake in the wild Talmudic and Mohammedan absurdities. We may affirm, too, that it was only by such a transmutation of old imagery into actual fact, there arose a great part of the Greek and Scandinavian, as well as Hindoo, mythologies.

Again: "The sun shall be darkened and the moon turned to blood." We are not quite certain whether this is poetry, strictly, or phenomenal prose,—that is, the ordinary conceptional expression for the fact in nature it represents. But taking it, as we well may, for the common Hebrew language to denote an eclipse, the one of the sun, and the other of the moon, and we have again the clear distinction on which we have before insisted. The expression may be used even after the primary image has ceased to be prominently suggested by it. It may even enter in the scientific language of a later date. A turning to blood, or some word which has that conception at its root, might even get into books of astronomy as the name for a lunar eclipse, just as has been the case in respect to this very word *eclipse*, (or a failing, or *going out*,) which, though now scientific was once as strictly phenomenal as the old Hebrew phrases.

We might cite here all those expressions in the Bible which have furnished infidels an opportunity for expatiating on what they would style the gross anthropomorphism of the Scriptures,—such as the ascribing to God, hands and eyes and other members of the human body.

But there is no need of dwelling upon them. The youngest Sabbath scholar is familiar with their natural and easy explanation. They are conceptional *names* for the divine strength, the divine omniscience, the divine providence. When pure spirituality, away from all images and all forms of space, is to be expressed, no science, and no philosophy, can approach the majestic style of the Old Testament—"Am I a God at hand and not afar off? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord?"—Jer. xxiii, 24. "Take ye good heed unto yourselves, for ye saw no matter of similitude when the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the fire. Take heed lest ye lift up your eyes unto heaven, and when ye see the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, should be led to worship them; Take heed to yourselves lest ye make you any likeness of any thing on the earth, or anything in the air, or anything in the waters beneath the earth."—Deut. vi, 15, 19, 23.

Other illustrations, if they were needed, might be derived from the use the Bible makes of the names of certain parts of the body to denote the soul, and different faculties of the soul. We refer to such words as *heart*, *reins*, *bowels*, the "inward parts." There might also be remarked, in passing, the almost entire absence of that analogous conception which is so frequent and so striking in modern phraseology. Allusion is had to the notion of the head or brain as the mind, or the seat of the mind,—a mode of conception to which we have become so accustomed as to regard it almost as a matter of direct consciousness. There is but one book in the Bible, in which such reference is to be found; we have it in the Chaldee of Daniel, (iv, 2,) where Nebuchadnezzar says,

—“The visions of my *head* troubled me.” No where else can there be discovered the least trace of it. So is it, also, in the Greek and Latin. The opinion as a speculative tenet may be sometimes found among the philosophers, but nowhere does it enter into the ordinary language. No word, or phrase, or metaphor, in common use has its ground in any such conception. Various other parts of the body are employed in the Scripture for this purpose, but it never commits itself by turning the conception into a fact, as our modern phrenology does when it ignorantly denotes its science of the skull by a word denoting originally a very different part of the body. The Greek *φῆν*, from whence is manufactured the modern word phrenology, comes the nearest to what is expressed by the frequent Hebrew *בליי*, the reins (Latin *renes*, Greek *φρένες*), the conceived seat of the inmost thoughts and affections of the soul. “Thou hast tried my heart and my reins.”

The distinction between matter of fact and matter of language arising from the mode of conceiving the fact, seems so plain that we may well wonder that any should have stumbled at declarations of which it offers so prompt a solution. The one we take as absolute verity, if we believe the record, and for this we hold it responsible. The other belongs to the form of outward expression, which even the medium who employs it may not regard as exact, or may use as the current and best understood language of his day. It is a matter of wonder, too, that objections drawn from this source should have been so strenuously pressed against certain passages of the Bible when the difficulty, if difficulty it be, pervades every part of the present revelation, and must appear in any



linguistic or written communication from the infinite to the finite mind, however advanced the science or philosophy by which its phenomenal language may be supposed to be corrected and improved.

## CHAPTER V.

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### ANALYSIS OF THE LEADING IDEA IN ITS APPLICATION TO THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT.

FACTS AS DISTINGUISHED FROM APPEARANCES.—DIVINE FACTS.—DIVINE ACTS OR BEGINNINGS IN NATURE.—THREE KINDS OF NATURALISM.—BLANK NATURALISM.—THEISTIC NATURALISM, OR NATURALISM OF SCIENCE WITH ITS ONE FIRST CAUSE.—THE RELIGIOUS OR SUPERNATURAL NATURALISM.—SIX DIVINE ACTS OR BEGINNINGS RECORDED IN GENESIS.—THREE KINDS OF PHENOMENAL LANGUAGE.—THE SIMPLY PHENOMENAL, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE SCIENTIFIC, AND POETICAL.—EACH HAS ITS OWN GRAMMAR AND LEXICON.

AS in the examples cited, so also in the account of creation, must we distinguish between the fact or facts (it may be in their essential agency the ineffable facts) revealed, and the phenomenal language in which, or through which, they are thus revealed. This is a very different thing from that arbitrary process of rejecting as poetical or mythical, whatever displeases our science, or, it may be, our ignorance. One method proceeds by no rules whatever. The other is grounded on laws of language, themselves possessing the most scientific beauty; and easy to be applied. We have God's eternal *facts* of creation, revealed to Moses in their chronological order through *conceptions* familiar to Moses (or it may be some one much older than Moses) and expressed by him in articulate Hebrew words which give birth to the same conceptions in the minds of others. Moses may have been scientifically very ignorant. His readers may have been equally so for many ages. So, too, our highest science may fall, and doubtless does fall, immensely short

of the ineffable truth, and may be in this respect as deficient a medium as the Bible account, whilst its dry formulas would be far below it in vividness of imagery and corresponding power of impression on the readers mind. All this may be so, and yet the record not only immutably true, but also the best possible mode that Infinite Wisdom could have devised to convey that truth, in its most important elements, to the finite human soul.

It is time to relieve our readers from these dry discussions and proceed to direct exegesis, but before doing so it may be well, by way of recapitulation, to state more formally the leading features of our main position in its application to the Mosaic account, and as such position may be referred to in our interpretations of other parts of the Scriptures having a bearing upon that ancient record.

By the term *facts* or *acts*, which we have so frequently employed, (and which in this connection is preferred to the word truth) may be denoted any physical agency as represented in the most outward phenomena, that is, those *appearances* which terminate in the individual world of each man's own sensorium. The appearance is not the *fact*, but representative of it. That, however, which may seem to occupy the place of a physical agency, when viewed in relation to those last or most outward phenomena in which it *appears*, may be itself phenomenal (or a mode of *appearing*) in respect to other seeming agencies lying back of it, and so on until we come to some principium, ἀρχή, principle, or beginning. The words *facts*, or *acts*, therefore, may better be taken, at once, of those divine *acts* which may be supposed to make a beginning, or beginnings, in nature,

and of which all other steps in the outgoing series are but appearances, or manifestations.\* Now, in respect

\*We may present the idea in something resembling a mathematical formula. Let  $X$ , then, represent the remote *initial* act, fact, or energy; let  $P$  represent the ultimate phenomenon, or last appearance to the senses; and  $p$ , with its functions, the intermediate causalities. The formula, or series, then would stand thus—

$$P, p_1, p_2, p_3, p_4, p_5 \dots p_n \dots X.$$

Here each intermediate term though apparently causative of the one that follows, is really itself a *phenomenon*, that is a manifestation of the preceding, and so on. The  $n^{\text{th}}$  term is ever at a remote distance from  $X$ , and only stands for the causal energy, as long as no one is discovered behind it. The mind a' priori *divines* causalities as standing behind all manifestations; science goes to work and *discovers* them, but only to become, in this manner, phenomenal in their turn. The initial act or energy  $X$ , is, in itself, ineffable, and is only named from some of its phenomena or manifestations. In taking, however, for such naming, any but the ultimate  $P$ , we run the risk of its being superseded, on equally good grounds, by some other, whilst in every such case there is an endorsment of it as a scientific finality. Nothing is, therefore, gained in one way, whilst much is lost in another. Once depart from the ultimate or most outward manifestation, and there is no catholic name the same for all men and for all ages.

Take for example, a solar eclipse. Here, in the series of phenomenal causalities,

$P$  is the ultimate phenomenon, that is, the *failing* or *going* out of the sun.

$p_1$ —The first step in scientific discovery; or, the moon's *appearing* to come between the sun and the eye of the spectator.

$p_2$ —The motion of the earth bringing the eye of the spectator into that relation.

$p_3$ —The position of the nodes of the moon's orbit, and which is as essential to the final phenomena as any of the secondary links.

$p_4$ —The law of the earth's annual revolution determinative of the times of nodal conjunction, along with which may

to such divine acts there may be three views. The first is that of sheer naturalism, as it may be called, which admits nothing strictly divine,—which has, in fact, no principium, but regards nature as an eternal ab ipso development, either cyclical, or rectilineally progressive. If it has a God at all, it is the God of Epicurus, not supra mundane, but extra mundane,—one who, if not a product

be taken the relative magnitudes and distances of the two bodies in producing the actual result.

$p_n$ —That unknown law which modern science has not yet reached, or that disposition of things with which is connected the cause of the earth's motion on its axes, and still more remotely, its revolution round the sun, or, with the sun, round some still more distant centre.

We are aware of scientific defects in the above scheme ; some of the terms may not seem to fall in the same category ; yet it suffices well for a general illustration.

Now from each one of these may be taken a name representative of the remote, or the whole, causality. We may name it from  $P$ , and call it an *eclipse* (ἔκλειψις), that is, a *failing* or *going out* ; or we may name it from  $p_1$  and call it an *occultation*, that is a *hiding*, or we may name it from  $p_2$  and call it a *nodal conjunction*, and so on. But, for the reasons before given, the first naming is the best, because the most catholic as well as the most significant. Making an application of such view to science generally, we might say that the  $n^{\text{th}}$  terms at the present stage of discovery are to be found in such words as *gravitation*, *magnetism*, *crystallization*, *elasticity*, etc.—These do yet stand for *energies*, or *causalities*, because there has not yet been discovered that still more remote energy of which they are *manifestations*, and which, when discovered, will convert them all into phenomena, that is, make them *appear*. When this is done, then instead of being simply νοούμενα, or *notions* of the mind, they become φαινόμενα ; in other words, they *come out*, and take their places among “*the things that are seen*”—whether by the eye or the telescope—or which are so known that their movements and dispositions can be *conceived*, or represented to the imaging faculty of the mind.

of nature herself, has nothing to do either with nature or the universe. The second may be called the theistic naturalism, which brings in a Deity, or first cause (as a *deus ex machina*) to start the machinery of the world, and then admits of no subsequent interference. It has one *divine act* away back in some remote eternity as far off as may be found convenient, but never repeated,—all things proceeding from it by an eternal and uninterrupted development. The third may be styled the religious, or supernatural naturalism, such as is taught in the Bible. This, besides the great principium, allows of many *divine acts*, or beginnings in nature, by which a new life is imparted that did not exist before and which the previous nature never could have developed,—or, a new *series* of forces is *originated*,—or, a change is made in old forces, so as to produce results that would not otherwise by any merely natural process have taken place. It is, in other words, the mixture throughout God's kingdom of the natural and supernatural as exhibited both in the creation of worlds and in the providential government of worlds,—in which combination the supernatural is not determined by any developments of the natural, nor is it arbitrary or lawlessly sovereign in its proceedings, but governed by laws of its own having their reason and their ground in its own divine and supra-mundane sphere.

A series of such *divine acts*, or *beginnings*, are presented to us in the first chapter of Genesis. They are six in number. There may have been subordinate ones under each grand operation (as for example the great generic beginning of animal life may have had many specific beginnings accompanying and following it) but

these six constitute the great outlines, and are presented to us in their chronological order.

But in what language shall this chronological order of facts be given to us so as to be a universal revelation for all men and for all ages. The question is answered by saying that language is of two kinds, or rather, has two stages in the process of communication. Words *present* images, or conceptions. Images or conceptions (or in other words phenomena) *re-present* the ultimate facts that stand away behind them. Thus all language is mainly if not wholly phenomenal. But here again arise three distinctions. There is the simply *phenomenal*,—the scientific—and the poetical. All these are phenomenal, but in a different way. The first employs only those *appearances* which present themselves directly and primarily, or as we might say, spontaneously, to the sense,—that are alike in all men, and thus directly represent for all men the ineffable fact standing behind them at however remote a distance. The second, or scientific, takes more interior phenomena, either as discovered by closer examination of the *prima facie* appearances, or as suggested to the mind's conception by some hypothesis in respect to their relations. The third selects its phenomena, or *makes* them, as the name poetry implies, or borrows them from other objects, or makes out of them analogies or comparisons for poetical effect. Again—they differ in their end or design. The object of the first is simply to give the more vivid thought of the ineffable fact, as a fact without reference to its philosophy. The object of the second is to explain the relation of phenomena to each other, and if possible (a thing, however, which science has never done and

never will do) to trace their connection all the way up to the great ultimate truth or agency they represent. The design of the third is not only to give a clear thought, like the first, but to connect with it some strong emotion.

Now in reference to these three kinds of language we may say, that the Bible can employ, and does employ most copiously, the *first* and the *third*; but it cannot make use of the *second*. The reason is that the adoption of scientific language, as above defined, would be an endorsement of its absolute correctness, whilst the responsibility of no such indorsement could be ever implied in the use of the others. Revelation could not so endorse the language of science because it is continually changing. Subsequent discoveries are ever showing its incorrectness and deficiency even in respect to the relations of phenomena themselves (which is its peculiar province), whilst from the great ultimate agencies it is ever at a distance which no formula can measure. Thus, to illustrate our leading thought by examples and terms suggested by the work of the second period, we may say that the words and conceptions *firmament*, *sky*, *water* above, and *water* below the firmament, mean the same in simple phenomenal language, that *atmospheres*, *rarefactions*, *condensations*, *reflections* and *refractions* represent in scientific,—the same too that the *treasures* or *store-houses* of the rain, the “molten looking glass,” the *out-spread tent*, the celestial *curtains*, and the *cloudy canvas* image to us in the poetical. Each represents, in its own way, the same remote facts, or apparatus of physical agencies. Each, however, gives a distinct version; and each is to be interpreted by its own grammar and lexicon.



Our object, then, is not that which is commonly attributed to similar efforts, namely, to reconcile science and the written revelation, or to assume any real or apparent controversy between them. They are to be regarded as belonging to two distinct spheres, as having, in fact, nothing to do with each other. And yet in showing this there is another inference that is equally to be avoided. We mean the very common view that the Bible is given solely to teach religion or morality in their narrowest definitions, and has nothing to do with any forms of physical truth. In opposition to this it may be maintained to be the highest authority in the physical as well as in the moral world—especially in those great problems that are connected with the origin and destiny of man, and of man's abode,—in other words, those ultimate physical facts that are inseparable from the most important moral bearings. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth"—nature comes and goes, whether at longer or shorter periods—"but the Word of our God shall stand forever." Its grand subject, it is true, is redemption, or the Kingdom of Grace, but its infallibility may be also regarded as embracing whatever in the world of matter or of spirit may have any connection with this its highest and peculiar theme.

## CHAPTER VI.

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### WORK OF THE FIRST DAY. BEGINNING OF CREATION.

THE MOSAIC BEGINNING NOT THE ABSOLUTE PRINCIPIUM.—THE FIRST VERSE NOT TO BE SEPARATED FROM THE REST.—THE FIRST ORIGINATION OF MATTER. WHAT IS MATTER?—THE HEBREW *Bara*,—THE LATIN *Creare*.—THE HEAVENS—ATMOSPHERICAL AND ASTRONOMICAL.—THE HEBREW *TEBEL*.—THE GLORY ABOVE THE HEAVENS—DUAL FORM OF THE HEBREW WORD.

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* The word *beginning* here may be taken in a relative as well as in an absolute sense ; and the context together with extrinsic considerations can alone decide which is the true interpretation. It certainly is not the absolute beginning of all being. It cannot be the beginning mentioned in the first chapter of the Gospel by John, when the Logos was with God,—the *πρωτοτόκος*, the First Born before all creation. It could not have been the beginning of all lower spiritual existence, such as the angelic, or the archangelic, or in general, the superhuman spiritual creations. There are not the least intimations in the Scriptures that angels were created at the same time with our present world ; but, on the other hand, not a few passages from which we might fairly infer the contrary. It could not, therefore, have been the absolute beginning of material substance ; for we have no right to suppose that any being below the rank of Deity, or, in other words, any created being, is purely spiritual, that is, immaterial, or without a corporeal vehicle of some kind possessing not only extent in space but dynamical properties which we cannot separate in our minds from the idea of the mate-

rial. Was it, then, the absolute beginning of the organized worlds, or of the matter of which they are composed; or does it refer simply to our own world with its immediate celestial system; or, finally, does it denote only the fashioning or forming of our world into its present state, without its being intended to give us any information respecting its more ancient elimination from absolute nonentity?

Now in respect to all these questions, there is only one that can be answered from the record with perfect confidence. It most surely does teach us the fashioning or forming, in some way, of our present world into its present state. All else is left uncertain and undetermined. Those who think that there is taught here an absolute origination of the earth's matter out of nothing, would regard the first verse as severed from the others, and as having special reference to the primordial act. But high as are the authorities who have defended this view, we cannot agree with them. Whatever may be believed in respect to this first origination of matter, whether of the earth or of all worlds, there is good reason for doubting whether it is actually meant to be set forth either in the beginning, or in any other part of this account. It is not, we think, the easy and natural impression one would get from the simplicity of the narrative. It would not readily occur to the reader that there was such a chasm between the first and subsequent verses. The language seems not to denote a separate primordial act, but to cover the whole process that follows. It suggests to us the fashioning of something which, as far as the material is concerned, is already in existence as the subject of the operation, or series of

operations, afterwards described. The beginning, then, is the *beginning of this fashioning*. According to this view, the first verse, instead of standing separate, may rather be taken as the introductory title, or caption, to the account, describing generally, or in the briefest terms, the same work which is stated more in detail below. *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*, —and this, as we may paraphrase it, was the manner, and these the steps, or chronological order, in which this creation of the heavens and the earth was accomplished. If this view be right, the beginning mentioned was not the metaphysical principium, but the beginning of our present mundane state of things; and this, we think will the more clearly appear from what may be said respecting the true meaning of the Hebrew בָּרָא, and our word *create*.

In truth, we know not what matter is. When we attempt to trace it to its ultimate principle (or beginning), we find remaining in our minds only that *notion of force or power* which belongs to the understanding. This is all that is left when we go back, or attempt to go back, of all such images or conceptions of the sense as are connected with the motion, and changing, or fashioning of matter *understood* in some way to exist. Hence its origin could not be conveyed to us under any such images or conceptions. It is, indeed, to be taken as the great physical fact, embracing the ground of every subsequent fact, that the matter (be it what it may) from which the heavens and earth subsist is not eternal, for then it would be included in the idea of Deity; neither did it come from chance, or any blind law or development, but must have had its origin in time, and from the

wisdom and word of God. We do not, however, think that this, true as it must be in itself, is meant to be taught directly in Genesis, because that whole account is presented to the sense, or rather to our faith through the sense. But this great fact is offered to our faith directly, or without any such intervening media,—it being impossible for the human mind to receive it in any other way. Thus the Apostle says, Hebrews xi, 3—“Through faith we *understand* that the worlds were made by the word of God, so that the things which *are seen* were not made of things which do *appear*.” Νοοῦμεν, says the inspired writer,—that is, we do not *perceive* it, nor *conceive* it, but take it directly by faith as an ultimate fact or truth involved in the soul’s idea of God, and which no image addressed to, or derived from, the conceiving faculty can represent. All the primal forces from which come the things seen lie entirely out of the field of the sense, either as perceived or conceived under any of the forms of the sense, and this must be especially true of the great primal originating force of all. We must be careful, however, not to regard it as simply the divine power continually energizing in space. Such a thought is full of peril as making matter but an emanation of deity, or a part of deity, and thus involving us in a mere physical pantheism. It is a real entity distinct from God, which God has originated, and to which he has given an immanent existence of its own in space and time,—how, we know not, and, perhaps, have no faculty for knowing; yet still we can believe it as the great ultimate fact of facts in the physical world. We but use the very words of the Apostle, when we say, it is not φαίνόμενον. but νοούμενον, not a phenomenon. not a thing that

*appears*, not a *thing seen*, not capable of being known by any of the senses, not imagined, or conceivable, but *understood*.\*

The account in Genesis, on the other hand, is entirely for the sense, or, we may rather say, addressed to the mind, and the faith, through the sense and the conceptions of the sense. It is this thought that furnishes the key to its true interpretation. And hence we may say, in the first place, that the Hebrew word אָרָץ, rendered *create*, has nothing abstract or metaphysical about it. It is as clearly phenomenal as any word in the language. Its primary meaning is to *cut*, hence to *shave*, shape, form, or fashion. So, also, the German word *schaffen*, by which Luther translates it, and which is of the same root with *schaben*, and the Belgic *schaeven*, means to *shave*, *cut*, and hence to make, or fabricate. It is that idea of *making*, which consists in cuttings, separations, and arrangements by division of what previously exists in a confused and disorderly state, rather than a combining or a constructing of new and scattered elements. No reader can avoid seeing how applicable this is to the greater part of the process; especially the work of the first five days, or until we come to the creation of man. Almost everything before is a *division*, an elimination,

\* Neander has admirably expressed it in his exposition of the Gnostic opinions on creation. "In the important passage, Hebrews xi, 3, that act of the spirit denoted under the name of faith—whereby the spirit rises above the whole linked chain of causes and effects in the phenomenal world to an almighty creative word as the ground of all existence—is opposed to the contemplation of the world by the sense acknowledging nothing higher than the connected chain of things in the world of *appearance*."

a bringing of one thing from, or out of, another. בָּרָא, seems also to borrow some shades of its meaning from the kindred root בָּרַר, which has its sense of *cleansing*, or purification, from the same primary ideas of *separating*, *dividing*, *purifying*, etc. So creation is a *clearing up*, a cleansing, a purifying, a bringing into order.

We may call that a key-passage to the best understanding of the radical nature of any word, where both the larger and the more specific applications seem to unite in the same general image. For such a passage we would direct the reader to Joshua, xvii, 18; where, in dividing the promised land among the tribes, it is said to the sons of Joseph—“The mountain shall be thine, for it is a forest, וַיִּבְרָא הוּא, and thou shalt *clear* it”—literally *cut it*, *hew it*, *separate it*, *clear it up*. The reference is to the operation of bringing into order waste forest land, or turning the chaos, the *tohu* and *bohu* of the wilderness, into a well arranged, cultivated, and life-supporting territory. The primary sense of the Latin *creare*, whence our word *create*, is somewhat different, though still presenting the same general idea of gradual process (that is process by steps or degrees), or that production of one thing from another which we call natural in distinction from sudden and unconnected operations. This primary sense of *creare* is growth, as is more clearly seen in the derivative *cresco*, and as it manifests itself in our words *increase*, *increment*, etc. The generative sense is still more plainly exhibited in the compounds, whence our words *procreate*, *recreate*, *concreate*, etc. To go still farther back into the very elements of the primitive language, there cannot be a doubt but that the Latin and the Anglo-Saxon words have each the same cognate

radicals CR, and GR, and that, therefore, *CR*eo and *GR*ow present originally the same conception, being, in this respect also identical, at the root, with φύσις, the Greek word for nature.\* There will be a better place for dwelling on this in another part of the argument. But some attention is given to it here, to show how much we may be misled by carrying back into an ancient word a purely modern conception. The modern metaphysical sense of *create*—that is, of *making something out of nothing*, comes entirely from later use in which the primitive image has fallen away. We do not, at all, deny the fact of such creation out of nothing, but it is a metaphysical tenet to which we are driven by the demands of the reason. There is, too, an expression of it in other parts of the Bible, but even then by means of imagery, that is by translating it into a phenomenal conception,—as it is most sublimely said, Isaiah xlvii, 13—“*I call them, they stand up together.*” But it is not taught here, we think, nor meant to be taught here in these simple yet grand phenomenal modes of speech. The etymological conceptions vary in different languages, but the fact they represent remains the same for all. It is the fashioning, constructing, forming, or making of something which already exists to be formed, fashioned, etc., and is brought into order through steps or degrees following each other in a regular methodical series. In the Hebrew and German it is imaged to the mind as a *cutting, separating, dividing* process. In the English and Latin (*creo, create,*

\*For the primary significance of the Latin *creo*, compare such passages as Virgil, *Georg.* II, 9,

*Principio arboribus varia est natura creandis.*



*eresco, recreo, procreo*), it is to *grow*, or *cause to grow*, to *renew*, to *generate*, to *increase*. In the Greek of the New Testament, it is to *build* (κτίζω κτίσις); as in Mark, xiii, 19—“*From the beginning of the creation which God created*—κτίσεως—ἐκτίσεν—*the building which God built.*”

*The heavens and the earth.* No words can be more strictly phenomenal than these, not only in the Hebrew but in every other ancient tongue. They denote not essence, nor power, nor cause, nor philosophical idea, nor scientific hypothesis, but simply *appearances*, “*things that are seen,*” the visible mundus just as it presents itself to the eye. Gesenius derives מַגְּבֹהַּ from an Arabic root, مَغْبَاه, unused in the Hebrew and signifying *to be high*. We cannot resist the impression that it has some connection with the common verb שָׂמַח, signifying *to be astonished*, to be filled with wonder, awe, or admiration. A kindred connection of etymological ideas gave rise, perhaps, to that beautiful portion of the Greek mythology that made Iris, or the rainbow, the daughter of *Thaumas*, or Wonder, as we read in the *Theogonia* of Hesiod, 266. The *wondrous height* would combine the two ideas, and this is elsewhere expressed by another word, רָם, as in that sublime personification, Habakkuk, iii, 10, where, instead of the common rendering, “*the deep uttered his voice and lifted up his hands on high,*” it should be, as Luther has it, die Höhe hob die Hände auf,—*the height* (or heavens) *lift up its hands*, in evident contrast with the abyss that utters its deep-toned voice below, like the solemn bass in the universal chorus. So also, Job, xxv, 2,—“*He maketh peace in his high places—in his highest heavens.*”

The primitive image suggested by the word, or which gave birth to the word, was doubtless that of the atmospherical heavens, or the sky, expressed more directly to the vision, but with less of wondering emotion, by the Latin *cœlum* from the Greek *κοῖλον*, and the Saxon *heaven* (from *heave*, *heafen*, *heofen*) signifying the *rising swell*, and hence the *hollow*, the *vault*, or *arch*. Cotemporary with this, or early following it, must have been the same conception expanded to the astronomical heavens, and giving rise afterwards to the notion of a second heaven, or heaven of heavens, as the phrase is employed by Solomon, 1 Kings, viii, and other writers of the Old Testament, to express the divine immensity. A still farther widening of the conception brings in the thought of a "third heaven," above the astronomical heavens, and viewed as the peculiar residence of the divine glory. The earliest Scripture allusion to this is probably that in Psalms, viii, 2, where the writer, though contemplating the divine greatness in the moon and stars, would seem to have a thought transcending them, when he says— "*Thou hast set thy glory,*" not *in* (a sense which the Hebrew preposition cannot have) but "*above the heavens.*" It suggests to us the *εὐπείρος ὑπερουράνιος*, of which Plato speaks in the *Phaedrus*, or the super-celestial region. It is that transcendent altitude of glory mentioned in Psalms, cxiii, 6, whence God is said to stoop down to see the heavens, as well the earth— "*He humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in the earth.*"

In this verse in Genesis, however, the easiest supposition is, that the writer has mainly in view the sky, or atmospherical heavens, the creation of which is more fully

given in the work of the second day. In the account of the fourth period there might seem to be some reference to the astronomical heavens, but even there, we think, the things described are rather the *appearances* of the heavenly bodies *in our own sky*, their disposition in the firmament, their relation to our earth, and the manifesting of that relation. In other words, it is not their creation in themselves, which is thus set forth, neither is it their nature, their scientific entities, but their coming out and taking their places in the visible heaven among the “*things that are seen*,” or “*that do appear*” to our world.

Both the earth and *visible heavens* thus regarded may be denoted, and frequently are denoted, by the single Hebrew word עֲרֶבֶת. This corresponds very nearly to the earliest sense of the Latin *mundus*, as denoting the visible sphere, or hemisphere, made apparently by the earth and the enclosing sky, although it is often used of the earth, just as we employ the Saxon *world* in the same limited manner—our word, too, having a similar phenomenal meaning in its etymological derivation from *roll* or *whirl*. The larger sense of עֲרֶבֶת is shown in its being generally used, in the Hebrew poetry, in the closing or amplifying part of the parallelism. Thus, in Psalms, xxiv, 1,—“The *earth* and its fullness—the *world* (*the tebel*) and all that dwell therein.” Psalms, xcvi, 13,—“For He cometh to judge the *earth*; He will judge the *world* in righteousness.” See, also, Psalms, xxxiii, 8; xcvi, 9. In the Episcopal Psalter version of Psalms, xcvi, 7, it is very appropriately rendered “*the round world*.” It is sometimes joined with עֲרֶבֶת, as in Prov.

viii, 31, Job, xxxvii, 12,—“the world of the earth”—that is, the world which encloses the earth, like the Latin *orbis terrarum*, except that the Hebrew expression is to be taken more in a meridional or superterrene, than in a horizontal aspect. Compare with this, also, Psalms, xc, 2, אָרֶץ וְחַבֵּל, — or, “*ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,*” where the conception evidently requires it to mean something beyond or more extended than the earth. This is, too, the image, 1 Samuel, ii, 8,—“For the Lord’s are the foundations of the *earth*, and He hath set the *world* (or *tebel*) over them.”

We would only remark farther, on the word *heavens*, that its dual number in the Hebrew seems to present a remarkable feature. It would mean literally the *two heavens*, or the *double heavens*; and might, perhaps, be regarded as primarily denoting a higher and lower sphere. But this would be too abstract, or rather, not enough phenomenal for a first conception. It more probably arose from the idea of a heaven above and a heaven beneath us, or of one double heaven partly above and partly beneath us. To a thoughtful mind, (and in this earliest gazing of the soul upon nature, all humanity must have been thoughtful, serious, full of meditative wonder), such would have been a very natural and prompt reflection from the phenomena of the rising and disappearance of the sun. This is probably the image, Psalms, xix, 4,—“In all the *earth* hath gone out their line, and their speech even to the end of the *world*” (or *tebel*). “*For there*”—that is in the ending of the *tebel*, or where it *appears* to end—“*hath He set a tent or tabernacle for the sun.*” The conception is the most

natural that can be imagined whether, for the earlier or the later men—

The sun that sets upon the sea  
We follow in his flight.

The tent, or tabernacle, of the Psalmist would be the heavens, or *tebel*, or *world* below, in which the sun seems to retire, as it were, to spend the night, and from whence he comes forth in the new morning of the east like a bridegroom from his curtained chambers, or as a refreshed hero to run his daily race. The reader may think that these illustrations are taking us out of the regular track of the argument; but we cannot avoid referring also to Ecclesiastes, i, 5; where there is the same thought of a complete solar revolution, and the consequent conception of a subterranean or antipodal vault, arch, sky, or *heaven*, in which the sun's real or apparent track must lie. We give it in the vivid conciseness of the Hebrew,—“Rises the sun, and sets the sun, and to his place again, panting, rising, there is he.” The reader will have no difficulty here in separating the poetical from the purely phenomenal. We cannot, however, help remarking that in the Hebrew נָשָׂא (panting) we have suggested the later classical image of the quick-breathing, though unwearied steeds of Phœbus. No scholar can avoid calling to mind the lines of Virgil, v, 738,

Torquet medios nox humida cursus  
Et me sævus equis Oriens afflavit *anhelis*.

## CHAPTER VII.

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### WORK OF THE FIRST DAY. THE CHAOS.

THE CONNECTING PARTICLE BETWEEN THE FIRST VERSE AND THE SECOND.—  
TOHU AND BOHU.—WAS THE CHAOS A PART OF THE MOSAIC CREATION?—  
WHAT WAS THE CHAOS?—MILTON—OVID.—THE DARKNESS.—THE ABYSS.—  
THE RUAH ELOHIM.—MERACHEPETH, THE HEBREW WORD FOR THE SPIRIT'S  
AGENCY.—ITS PRIMARY PULSATILE OR THROBBING SENSE.—ANCIENT MYTH OF  
THE EGG.

“*For the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*” Our common version has “AND” instead of *for*, as the connecting particle. The difference may seem slight, and yet there may be connected with it quite an important modification of the general sense. The Hebrew is very scanty in its conjunctions, and therefore the particle (Vau) is often employed, not only to denote sequence or connection in order of time, but to show the ground, reason, or motive, for what is said. In one view of the passage, the first verse contains an action separate from those that follow; in another, it only expresses the same events in a condensed titular form. According to this latter interpretation, the conjunction shows the ground or reason of the proceeding. *In the beginning God created, that is, fashioned, formed, reduced to order.* And why? Because the earth which was to be created was then without form and void. It was a fit subject for such a process. On the other supposition, the conjunction would seem quite

unnatural, and could only be defended on the general ground that these particles in Hebrew may often denote the slightest transitions—in the style of the narrative as well as in the order of the events.

“*Was without form.*” We cannot lay much stress on the scanty Hebrew tenses, but unless the context forbids, it may just as well be understood in the praeter past;—“and the earth *had been* without form and void.” How long, no one can know; for the account does not deign to give us any information. Even, however, as commonly rendered, the substantive verb certainly seems to imply the existence, in some elemental way, of the mass or matter on which this creative work was then *beginning* to take place. And the earth, *at that time*, or that beginning, was without form and void. It was *tohu* and *bohu*, *confusion* and *emptiness*, or as Luther admirably renders it, *wüste und leer*, *waste* and *desolation*. The Vulgate translates it, *inanis et vacua*. In this state, it was not a *creation*, if we can place any reliance on the clearest primitive sense of words; for the Hebrew, as well as the Latin and English radicals, presents, as we have shown, the very opposite ideas. How it came in such a condition, no one can say. Whether it was the result of a progress, or a deterioration, we have no means of knowing, either from nature or from revelation. It may have been, at some time, a *direct* work of God, or it may have been produced by him through a causality which may well be described by the word *natural*. If, however, we are right in our philological view, it was not, in either way, a *creation*. The ideas associated with this word belong wholly to the subsequent process. The *tohu* and *bohu* may have been

a rudimentary chaos which had never yet assumed order —such as we may suppose to have been the condition of perhaps many an elemental world—or it may have been a chaos to which some world or system had been reduced from some previously better state. It may have lain long in ruins; it may have gone through an immense number of older cycles; or it may be that it was now for the first time made the subject of a *creation*, that is, according to the Latin word, an orderly *growing* through harmonious laws, or, according to the Hebrew conception, a *separating*, a *dividing*, a clearing up, a bringing into order, an arranging of outward relations, by which it comes in harmony with the exact measurements of universal, objective time, and is thus prepared for the abode of life, happiness and rationality.

But what, then, was this ancient chaotic condition of our planet? We know only as Holy Scripture informs us. Science can tell us nothing about it. The chasms that part us, whether wide or brief, can never be securely traversed by her slow moving steps. From the other side of the wild abyss, and across the intervening periods, comes wafted to us by the breath of inspiration our only image, and that human mind to which it was first revealed, has represented this image, or conception, to other human minds, by those two Hebrew words in which is pictured all that can be thought or imagined, or understood, of this primeval mystery.

It was *tohu* and *bohu*. These terms do not often occur in the Hebrew Scriptures, and yet the places in which they are found are such as to give their meaning beyond all reasonable doubt. In Deuteronomy, xxxii, 10, the first is used of the *waste*, *wilderness*, or *desert*,



through which the children of Israel were so long wandering. In Job, vi, 18, it denotes the condition of the streams that disappear in the summer's drought,—“*They go up* (that is, they evaporate,) *into tohu,—they perish.*” So, also, Job, xii, 24, “*They wander in tohu where there is no path.*” In Isaiah, xxiv, 10, it is applied to a ruined city. In Isaiah, xl, 17, 23, xli, 29, xlix, 4, lix, 4, 1 Samuel, xii, 21, it is used to denote what is utterly vain, formless, worthless, or of no account. Besides Gen., i, 2, there are two other places in which both words occur together. They thus appear in a most remarkable passage, (Jeremiah, iv, 24,) in which there seems to be pictured to the prophet's vision a scene that is almost the reverse of the creative process. In this strange diorama the world would appear to be going back again into the void and formless period. The mountains are unsettling; the hills move to and fro; man is gone; bird and beast have fled, and are to be seen no more. The representation strongly suggests Campbell's and Byron's vision of the Last Man, some features of which might seem to have been drawn from this very passage. The verse we have chiefly in view may be looked upon as a sort of back ground to the whole picture,—“*I looked upon the earth and it was tohu and bohu; I looked to the heavens and they no more gave their light.*”

“ 'Twas chaos come again,  
Where nature ends,—his dark pavilion spread  
Wide on the wasteful deep; with whom enthroned  
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
The consort of his reign.”

The other passage, Isaiah, xxx, 11, is of more account, from its etymological suggestions. Speaking of the desolation of Idumea, the Prophet says,—“ From generation

to generation shall it be waste ; for ever and ever shall no one pass through it ; for He will stretch upon it the line of *confusion* and the stones of *emptiness*" — the line of *tohu* and the stones of *bohu*. Line is the well-known term of measurement ; stones denote the *weights* of the balance ; as in Proverbs, xvi, 11,—“ A just balance and weight are the Lord’s ; and his work are all the *stones* of the cup.” See, also, Deuteronomy, xxv, 13. We have, then, the two essential ideas which are so well given in our common version of Genesis, i, 2,—*without form and void*,—one expression referring to utter irregularity of dimension and outward extent, the other to the deficiency of *gravity*, denoting not so much an absolute as a relative want of weight—in other words, a fluid or rarified condition with an absence of all solidity and cohesion, or it may be, a huge nebulosity that had been floating through space for millions and millions of years, if any such term can be employed of that which has no inward or outward measures of time.

Its extent may have been vastly greater than that which the earth afterwards occupied when *created*, that is, reduced to order. But aside from any such thought of absolute extent, there is a natural connection between the conception of vastness and that of desolation and disorder. Hence the Latin *vastus*, *vasto*, *vastare*, (whence our *waste*,) presents both images as alike primary. The same appears, also, in the Latin *immanis*, the vast, the immeasurable, as well as the savage, the wild, the desolate. The force of such a conception does not depend merely on irregularity or unmeasurableness of outward bound, but upon the want of inward order and *creative* division. Everything appears more immense, and is

conceived of as more immense, which presents to the eye or the imagination no internal arrangements or partitions on which they can rest and find relief. Hence the *vastness* of the wilderness, and the still more desolate vastness of the ocean and the desert—

“Illimitable, without bound  
Without division—where length, breadth, and height,  
And time, and place are lost.”

But the chaos, whatever may have been its origin and history, was not creation, or any part of the creation. Milton, with more of philosophic truth than epic fancy, speaks of it as

“The womb of nature and perhaps her grave—  
The dark materials to create more worlds,  
By God ordained.”

Such an authority may be esteemed as of little value in questions of science or theology, and yet, on the closest examination of the Mosaic account, we cannot help thinking that our great bard made not merely a poetical, but a true and Scriptural, distinction, when he separated the chaos, both in name and idea, from the well-ordered world that afterward arose,—

“As yet the world was not, and chaos wild  
Reigned where these Heavens now roll, where earth now rests.”

There are the same ideas connected with the Greek word *Xáος*. Its derivation from *χάζω* (*χάω*, *χαίνω*, *χάσμα*) presents a like conception of a gloomy vastness. There is also in it, as used both by poets and philosophers, a similar idea of formlessness, but with more of a metaphysical reference to inward law or organization than to mere outward shape. “In the beginning,” says Hesiod, “was chaos”—the immense unformed mass in which

everything lay commingled; earth, air, fire and water, light and darkness, cold and heat, not yet parted from each other—

Rudis indigestaque moles—

a rude unorganized bulk—as Ovid describes it to us, in terms so nearly corresponding to those of the Bible, that we can hardly help regarding his account as but the echo of the old tradition. *Unwrought, invisible* (ἀκατασκεύαστος ἀόρατος) is the Septuagint version;—*invisible*, because as yet possessed of none of that distinction and partition of feature which are as essential to perfect vision as light itself,—or *invisible*, because yet enveloped in that primeval darkness which Hesiod represents as the oldest daughter of chaos. Ἀκατασκεύαστος is but the negative of the Hebrew word;—*unwrought*, that is,—uncreated.

“*And darkness was upon the face of the deep.*” Creation had not yet commenced. Darkness still rested upon the vast abyss. There was no light upon it from abroad, and none had been eliminated from within, because it was as yet undisturbed by the quickening or creative power. The *tehom*, (תְּהוֹם), or *deep* is evidently the same with the *tohu* (תֹּהוּ) mentioned before. It is, indeed, etymologically different, and yet the word, as here used, can only be another name for the chaos, although afterwards employed to denote other objects which the imagination might regard as presenting some pictorial resemblance to the primeval waste. Thus it is applied to any great tumultuous waters, as in Exodus, xv, 5, 8; Psalms, xxxiii, 7, lxxviii, 15,—to the great sea, Psalms, xxxvi, 7; Amos, vii, 7,—and more especially to the supposed or real abyss inside the earth, as

being nearer to the original image, and on the ground, perhaps, of its being regarded as the confined remains of the old watery chaos. We have this sense, Psalms, lxxi, 20; Job, xxviii, 14, and in the account of the flood, Genesis, vii, 2, where it is said "*the fountains of the great deep were broken up.*"

In the Septuagint it is well rendered, in this place, by the word ἄβυσσος, the *abyss*, from (α) privative, and βυσσὸς βυθός, or βάθος (Saxon *bottom*), presenting, in this way, the same conception as *tohu*, the *measureless*, the *unfathomable*. Before this, as we have said, or for ages before this, it may have been an immense floating nebulousity, or part of some still larger nebulousity, but at this period it is a wide fluid mass, or waste of water, without a shore, without a bottom, without a sky above, or any terminating solid bound.

*And the spirit of God brooded upon the face of the waters.* Here then we have the *principium*, the *beginning* of the creation,—of that creation, we mean, which is recorded in the opening chapter of our Bibles. This moving or brooding of the spirit was the primeval act. Hardly any reader, we would think, could mistake the force of the expression thus standing by itself. But, when we compare such passages as Psalms, xxxiii, 6; Job, xxxiii, 4; Genesis, vi, 3; Job, xxvi, 13; Isaiah, xxxiv, 16, there would seem to be hardly room for a doubt, that this *Ruah Elohim*, or *Breath of God*, is truly the going forth of the divine power energizing in nature, and the source of the vegetable and animal, as well as the rational and moral life. It is called *ruah* (*wind* or *breath*) not on account of its supposed materiality, but because this substance (the *air*) would be to the early

mind the best conceptional representative of the immaterial power, whether regarded as the divine or human spirit. Nothing in nature would be more mysterious. Although belonging to the world of sense, nothing would be more suggestive of something beyond it. It is felt, but not seen. It is all-pervading, and yet is known only in its effects. Men "hear the sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth." So is it with the immaterial spirit, only in a higher degree, and hence the analogy which has led to the use of this or a corresponding term to express the same conception in all the primitive languages.

Some interpreters, however, have been inclined to take *ruah* here in the sense alone of wind, and the divine name as a magnifying epithet, or as used hyperbolically, of whatever is highest or greatest of its kind. It was a wind, they say, a wind of God, meaning a mighty wind, just as the expression, *mountain of God*, Psalms, lxxviii, 16, or, *river of God*, Psalms, lxxv, 10, means a most lofty mountain, or a most glorious stream. In the same way the earliest Greek poets seem to have used the epithets θεῖος, δῖος, θεσπέσιος, etc., of anything vast or wonderful,—as in the Iliad, 1, εἰς ἄλα δῖαν, *to the divine sea*. But, however, such poetical or hyperbolical use may have come in, in later times, we cannot well suppose it to have obtained in so early a stage of language, or in respect to so early an event. In the cases referred to, it is simply the natural poetically amplified by epithets derived from the supernatural. But here, if we may look any where, is the divine power per se. It was an act above nature, a beginning of nature, or a beginning in nature of a new order of events,—a new energy that

never could have been developed out of the antecedent chaos.

If it was a wind in the usual sense, still it must have been a wind employed by God as his agent. But why take this process to avoid that more obvious spiritual interpretation, which connects itself so easily with the most common and familiar use of the phrase *Ruah Elohim* in so many passages of the Old Testament? If it ever means the Divine Spirit, the Divine Life, in the higher sense, (and who can read the Scriptures and have any doubt on that point?) certainly this, of all others, is the place where we should expect such a significance of the terms. If the Divine Spirit is not occupied in creation, where could we reasonably look for any manifestation of its action?

Before this, there had only been, in the chaotic mass, what might be called the dead force of cohesion—and that, too, of the feeblest kind—or the mere *outward* force of a gravitating tendency towards some other bodies; but now there is an *inward* power—a separating, arranging, selecting, organic power—which may be regarded as the beginning of life, although, as yet exhibiting itself in the chemical aspect, rather than the higher modes in which it afterwards energized. The first effect of the new life is the elimination of light. This, it is true, is said to be by the divine command; and yet the language clearly suggests the thought that the agitation, or brooding, of the *Ruah Elohim* upon the waters was directly concerned in its production.

An exegetical reason why *ruah* cannot be interpreted of the winds, is derived from the use of the word מֵרָחַף (merahpeth.) The verb never means *to blow*, and has

no connection, either in its primary or secondary sense, with any of the well known phenomena of wind, or the direct onward motion, such as might seem to be expressed by our translation, *moved upon*. We have rendered it *brooded*; or it might be translated, *hovered*. Either of these words would present the primary image, or conception, better than the term in our common version. Any one may be as certain of its meaning as the best Hebrew scholar, by just turning to Deuteronomy, xxxii, 11,—“*As the eagle hovers, or broods, over its young.*” It is the same word and the same conception. Hence Milton’s idea, which, although in poetry, is more accurate than our prose translation,—

“Dove-like sat brooding o’er the vast abyss.”

Hence, too, the idea of *incubation* which we find in almost all mythological cosmogonies. But of that, in another part of the argument. We get the general image from Deuteronomy, xxxii, 11; but by comparing it with Jeremiah, xxiii, 9, we arrive at the more inward or radical conception of the word — “My heart is broken within me; all my bones *quivered*” (רחפני). It denotes, primarily, a *fluttering* — a tremulous motion, acting and reacting — a vibrating — an undulating — a communicating by pulsation or throbbing — in other words, that conception of life we find in the earliest languages, and from which the highest physiological and physical science is ever deriving its most expressive technical terms. It is the same elemental process on the great scale of the earth’s commencing organism, that is exhibited in the types and processes of all lesser vivification.

So far, we have only followed the most literal exegesis. If permitted, however, to indulge in that sober specula-



tion which it so readily suggests, we might say, that before this, the chaos was a mere mass acting, and acted upon, *mechanically*; now it is beginning to be a *nature* strictly, with an inward *law* and life, or whatever else is implied in the word nature. As far as our earth is concerned, this new energising power is the first *beating* of nature's pulse, the first *throbbing* of her mighty heart. Or, to change the metaphor, yet keep as its ground the same primary image, the tremulous pulsations denoted by the intensive *piel* significance of the Hebrew verb, are the first note in the grand diapason, the first low trembling barytones in that ascending scale of harmonies that were to terminate at last in Eden and humanity.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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### WORK OF THE FIRST DAY. THE LIGHT.

THE COMMAND TO THE LIGHT.—INTERPRETATION.—WAS IT THE FIRST ORIGIN OF LIGHT?—IS LIGHT ETERNAL?—GOD DWELLING IN LIGHT.—THE LIGHT HIS ROBE.—MILTON.—LONGINUS.—DIVISION OF THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS.—THE NAMING OF THE LIGHT AND THE DARKNESS.—DAY AND NIGHT.—THE HEBREW WORD YOM.—HAD MOSES THE CONCEPTION OF A SOLAR DAY OF TWENTY-FOUR HOURS?—NO TRACE OF SUCH CONCEPTION IN ANY SUBSEQUENT HEBREW PROSE OR POETRY.

“*And God said—Let there be light, and there was light.*” It will be at once inferred from what has been said before, that we do not regard this as denoting the creation of light for the first time as an absolute substance. The mention of the previous darkness of the chaos suggests a simpler, and yet a no less interesting and sublime meaning. And God said, *Let there be light, and light was there.*—*Let there be light on that dark chaos.* Or it may be used, as the word *light* is sometimes employed in English, for an adjective—*Be it light, and light it was.* This was the first *separation* of the blended elements. The most ethereal form of matter was parted from the darkwatery mass. Light was the first born. The language would indeed suit either conception,—that of a first creation, or of an evolving or manifestation,—and either might stand as a representative of the ineffable truth.

In fact of the essence, or primal force, or fount of light, we know nothing. All that science has done falls

infinitely short of this. All that it has to say of rays, or fluids, or vibrations, or undulations, gives us only the phenomenal conditions under which this mysterious substance may be supposed to manifest itself. However paradoxical it may sound, yet it may be affirmed that light itself, *per se*, is invisible. Its primal force, or entity, is one of the things "*that are unseen*" — "*that do not appear*;" although by it other things are made phenomenal, or manifest to our senses. "*Knowest thou the place where light dwelleth, that thou shouldst take it to its bound, or understand the path to its house*?" It is the challenge which the Almighty makes to Job out of the thundercloud; and the intelligent child, who first sits down to the sacred volume, knows as much about the true answer as the most scientific man of the age. What is light? We know it as an effect, as a sensation; we analyse the phenomena through which this "unseen" entity manifests itself, or "*appears*," in the world of sense; thus far has science travelled towards the far distant "*place of its abode*." But the Bible tells us more than this. With a sublimity which immeasurably transcends all science, it represents light as the raiment of God. "*Thou clothest thyself with light, as with a garment*." Psalms, civ. 2. "*Who dwelleth in light—in light unapproachable and full of glory*." 1 Timothy, vi. 16. This is merely a figure, it may be said, but then it is a figure which must represent some unutterable reality. Other things are invisible, or obscure, because of the darkness that is in them, or in the percipient, but God is invisible because of his transcendent brightness. Or, to express the thought in another form, in comparison with "*the glory that exceedeth*" the very

“light is as darkness.” There would seem to be something of this thought in that difficult yet remarkable declaration, Job, xxxvi, 30, which should be rendered, “*He spreadeth His light about Him,*” and then what follows may be taken as a comparison, — “*even as He hath covered the roots (or bottom) of the sea.*” In contrast with the Divine splendor, even light itself is dark as the shadow that rests upon the depths of the ocean.

“His robe is the light.”

Was it eternal, then? Did it thus ever form the Divine abode, the “secret place of the Most High,” the inermost Shekinah in which God dwells? On such a question we would not turn over a leaf to get the answer of science or philosophy. If the Scriptures had declared in any way the absolute eternity of that substance whose motions are the cause of vision in sentient beings, we should have had no hesitation in believing it, and no fears on the ground of any supposed pantheistic tendency. But they tell us nothing on the subject. From the glorious similes, however, which revelation employs, as well as from the rank which science assigns to light, we should not be rash in regarding it as, at least, among the first things that came out of nonentity. If we shrink from declaring it to be absolutely eternal, still may we view it as of all physical entities the nearest related unto Deity —

“Offspring of Heaven, first born,  
Bright effluence of bright essence increate;  
Whose fountain who shall tell! Before the sun,  
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice  
Of God as with a mantle didst invest  
The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
Won from the void and formless infinite.”

But whatever may have been the primal origination of light, the whole view we have taken of this account of our world's creation is in the way of that exegesis which would regard this primal origin as being here set forth. By God's command it *shone out* of the darkness, ἐκ τοῦ σκότους, (as the Apostle\* paraphrases the passage in Genesis), and shed its splendor on the darkness; but there is nothing which gives us a right to infer, that this was the first time of its ever *shining out*, or being manifested, in the universe. Neither is such a view necessary for preserving the sublimity of the passage. *Be light*, or, *be it light on that dark chaos, and light was there*. Such a rendering will still be worthy of all that admiration with which it was regarded by one of the noblest of heathen critics. We refer to Longinus, in his treatise De Sublimitate, who calls Moses "no common man," and quotes this as among the very highest examples of what he calls greatness of style.

*And God divided the light from the darkness.* Here, too, is the sense of the Hebrew words sufficiently satisfied by referring them directly to the particular shining of the light upon the chaos. לְהַבְדִּיל is only a more specific application of the general sense of פָּרַד. Here is the first *separation*, the first *cutting*, or *cutting out*, if we would ever keep before our minds the primary force of the creative word. The work is no longer *formless*. The as yet remaining unorganized mass, and the light which envelopes and shines upon it, now *form* two distinct departments. Or the *division* may be one of time, and may refer to the point or period on one side of which was the light and on the other the darkness; or it may

\* 2 Corinthians, iv. 6.

represent the separating effect of light itself, like an act of creation, giving form and outline and feature to that which before possessed neither division nor boundary, and which is so graphically compared (Job, xxxviii, 14,) to the effect of the seal upon the clay.

There is a remarkable passage in the Koran (Chap. 113,) which we cannot help regarding as having been originally suggested by this language, and as thus presenting a Mohammedan or Arabic interpretation of its meaning,—“*I fly for refuge to the Lord of the day break.*” God is so called in reference to the first morning of creation. The original Arabic word preserves the analogy of the idea. Like אֶרָא and הִבְרִיחַ, it signifies a *cleaving*, a *cutting out*, and denotes, says Al Bedawi, “the proceeding to light from the darkness of privation.”—See Note in Sales’s *Koran*, Chap. 113.

And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. No one supposes that this means an audible calling. The Fathers understood the matter as well as the best modern critic. It was not, says Gregory of Nyssa, an articulate sound, but an expression of the Divine will. In Scripture, *to name* is to *distinguish*. It denotes here a continuation of what is expressed in the first clause, or the original division therein indicated. The word אָרָא, *He called*, is also used in the Bible to denote that transcendent act by which divine power is exerted in nature, or upon nature. “*I called to them*, (Isaiah, xlvi, 13,) *they stood up together.*” He called aloud to the light, or the day, and it awoke from its latent state among the slumbering elements of chaos. Both senses may be here united,—the calling *into* being, essentially, or the calling *out* phenomenally those charac-

teristics which are the ground of all denominational language,—which, in every tongue, enter into the radical conceptions denoted by the representative word, and may therefore be most appropriately called its *naming*. There is no difficulty in regarding these expressions, day, light, etc., as borrowed from their applications at a much later period, and carried back to denote the ineffable things they most resemble. It is, however, a better view, as we shall attempt to show, that we have here the primary idea of the word, in respect to its nature or quality, in distinction from its quantity. A day is not so much that fixed duration which is afterwards determined by settled modes of measurement, as a periodical time, be it longer or shorter, marked by the opposite successions of light and darkness, or what may be supposed to be analogous to them.

*And there was an evening and there was a morning, —one day, or first day.* This is the most simple and literal rendering of the Hebrew, and in the right view of it we think we have the key to the great biblical question, whether these are indefinite unmeasured periods, or what we call natural days of twenty-four hours. In favor of the former opinion there has been drawn an argument from the Hebrew use of the word יום (yom) for any period of time presenting a completed course or unity of events irrespective of precise duration. There can be no doubt at all of such usage. It belongs to the Hebrew, as it does to most other languages. The word for day is much more frequently used in this manner, than year or *month*. But this is by no means the strongest proof of the position. It makes it *possible* that the word may be so employed here. It makes it even

highly *probable*, when we take into view the peculiar nature of the events recorded. Still there is another, and a better, and we think unanswerable, argument to be derived from the fact that in this stage of the creative process there were no regular phenomenal measures of time. We must interpret the writer in consistency with himself, whether we suppose him inspired or not. The revelation is made to us *through* the conceptions of Moses, and although such conceptions are not binding on us as the absolute truth, yet they are the medium, or one stage in the medium, through which it is conveyed, and by whose aid, therefore, it must be exegetically studied. On either view, then, we must look for a harmony of representation in the writer's own mind. He certainly could not have had in his thought a common day, in the sense of one measured by an earthly revolution, or by the apparent circuit of the sun. Of the first, or the revolution of the earth, it is evident he had no conception; and it was not until the fourth period, according to his own statement, that the great luminaries were either actually created, or optically lit up in the heavens to be signs or measures of seasons, and *days*, and years,—one to rule, or measure, the day, and the other the night. This unmeasured period, then, whatever its length, could not have been a common or *natural* day, as we call it, unless arbitrarily divided without any reference to measuring celestial phenomena. Not only are there wanting the most important elements of the thought, as connected with such celestial phenomena, but what is left of the conception of a common day in its mere length, is of such a kind that it can hardly be presented on the canvas of the imaging faculty. For



nothing is more difficult to conceive of than simple determined duration in the absence of all the common measures by which it is determined.

From this consideration alone we may say, with a good degree of confidence, that Moses had not in his mind, in his thought, in his conceptive faculty, any such image. He had just what he has given to us, the idea of a period commencing in darkness and ending in light, a bounded period, measured by chaos on the one hand and the birth of a higher organization on the other, a period to which for these reasons there is given that name, *yom*, which is afterwards used of the cyclical solar succession of light and darkness. But of the duration of this day he has not told us, because there was no revealed conception of it present to his own mind; for so we must judge, in the absence of all opposing proof. Here, then, beyond all question, the easy and unforced interpretation is on the side of the indefinite periods. We must say that we never saw an answer to it that did not appear far-fetched and unnatural. What, too, would seem to add strong confirmation, is the fact that in the beginning of the next chapter, the whole time of creation, including all the periods in one completed round or *course of events*, is, on this account, also called a day—*In the day when the Lord made the heavens and the earth.* Of this great *day of days*, it might also have been said, there was an evening and a morning. It began when darkness was upon the face of the waters; it ended in the glorious morning of Paradise. Such a use of *yom*, or day, in the Bible, may be shown in many other passages, but this is the more remarkable and the

more valuable from its direct connection with the Mosaic account.

There is another argument to which we cannot help attaching much weight. The Hebrew poets abound in allusions to the stupendous phenomena of creation. The grandeur of the narration breathes its spirit into their sublimest poetry; and yet there is in no one of them the least reference to such diurnal periods of duration equivalent to our ordinary sun-measured days of twenty-four hours. Now, if these are supposed to be ordinary days, while yet the sun's diurnal measurements do not commence until the fourth period, then is there a difficulty which is patent upon the very face of the account. It forces itself upon our attention. The Hebrew writers must have seen this difficulty as clearly as we see it. They must have been struck by the strange omission of all explanatory statements; and yet in their case, the imagination is never driven to such expedients for making a night and morning, or alternate transitions of light and darkness, as have suggested themselves to modern defenders of the twenty-four hour theory. There is no allusion to any alternating hemispheres, whether made by a revolution of the earth or the heavens; no conception of the darkness coming back and the light going out, or of any apparatus for that purpose, although some image of the kind would be, on such a supposition, indispensable to any pictorial representation the mind could make to itself of the facts narrated. It is obvious that they did not see the difficulty, or the necessity of any *special* exercise of divine power in relation to it. Had it been otherwise, such conceived expedients would have formed no unimportant part of the poetical imagery,

whether supposed to come from inward or outward inspiration. The conclusion, then, is irresistible. If they saw and felt no such difficulty, they could not have held the view from which it inevitably arises. If they had had in their minds the thought of the short days, and of an ante-solar apparatus for making such semi-diurnal successions of light and darkness as afterwards existed, it would seem impossible for them not to have occasionally dwelt upon it as one of the most marvellous features in the whole history. But nothing of the kind do we find in David, Solomon, Job, or any of the Prophets, although there were so many connections of thought that might have called it forth.\* They expatiate, at times, upon everything else that is wonderful in the first chapter of Genesis—the birth of the light, the stretching out the firmament, the division of the waters from the waters, the separation of the dry land from the former universal ocean, the bounding of the wild waves, the breathing into man of the spirit of life. But instead of the most

\* One of the most distinct references to the creation is to be found in Nehemiah, ix, 6. It was at that period in Jewish history and the Jewish literature, when the mention of the days in their natural or solar sense would have been likely to come in, if it had been prominent in the writer's thoughts, or had had any place in his mind among the wondrous facts of their old books. There can be but little doubt, too, of there being here a reference to the Mosaic account, as it is an epitome of God's great manifestations connected with the Jewish history from the beginning of the Hebrew records. And yet there is no mention of the days, as we now regard them. "Thou, O God, alone hast made the heavens, yea, the heaven of heavens and all their host, the earth and all which is upon it, the seas and all which is in them. Thou gavest life to them all, (or thou didst quicken them all,) and the hosts of heaven worship thee. Thou art Jehovah, God, who

remote allusion to these marvellously short days, such as would have had the most tempting charm for them had they possessed the Talmudic or Rabbinical spirit, there is evidently a laboring, as in Job, and Proverbs, viii, to set forth the immensely prolonged antiquities of the proceeding. May we not regard the fact, too, that they were kept from any such puerilities and vain imaginations as a striking evidence of their being truly inspired by that creative Spirit, who employed their poetical conceptions and emotions as the best medium through which His own great thoughts could find their most vivid utterance to the human soul.

If this first day, or period, then, was an indefinite, unmeasured one, so were all the rest. If it was a *yom olam*, or *day of eternity*, to use the expression we find, Micah, v, 1, that is belonging to the ante-time, or ante-measured-time period—the same character must be possessed by all the other cyclical periods into which this great work was divided. This, we think, must be the feeling of every

didst choose Abraham and bring him out from Ur of the Chaldees.”

This omission has been strangely overlooked by commentators, or, more strangely still, the contrary has been assumed without evidence. Says Dr. Turner, in his Commentary on Genesis,—“It is evident that all subsequent sacred writers who take notice of the creation, as a work of six days, do, invariably, assume a literal sense of the word day.” The declaration of so truly learned a man as Dr. Turner, and what is still higher merit, of so careful and truthful a commentator, certainly carries with it great weight, and that is the very reason why we specially cite it. But we may well ask him, Where are any such notices to be found in the Hebrew Scriptures? The fourth commandment is but a repetition, and nowhere else is there any allusion to such days, or their literal, that is, in the common sense, their short duration.

one who just lets the sublime narrative, in all its original simplicity, make its natural impression on a mind uninfluenced by geology, on the one hand, or any prepossessions of a different kind, on the other.

## CHAPTER IX.

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### WORK OF THE FIRST DAY.

#### THE WORDS DAY, MORNING AND EVENING.

THE NIGHT COMES FIRST.—WHAT WAS THE FIRST NIGHT?—THE FIRST MORNING. INDEFINITE USE OF THE WORD DAY.—EXTRAORDINARY ON THE VERY FACE OF THE ACCOUNT.—OBJECTION CONSIDERED.—MENTION OF EVENING AND MORNING.—ETYMOLOGICAL ANALYSIS.—THE KORAN.—ARGUMENT FROM THE PECULIAR STYLE OF THE EXPRESSION.—WHEN DID THE FIRST NIGHT BEGIN?—DIFFICULTIES IN THE WAY OF THE TWENTY-FOUR HOUR MEASUREMENT.—THE FIRST DAY A KEY TO ALL THE REST.—CREATION A SUCCESSION OF NATURAL PROCESSES COMMENCED BY SUPERNATURAL ACTS.

*And there was an evening and there was a morning, one day.* We must observe here that the night comes first, as in all the traditional mythology of the Greeks, Egyptians and Hindoos, that has evidently been derived from this old account. "From chaos," says Hesiod, "was born black Night, and then from Night was born Æther (or the Light) and the Day."

Ἐκ Χάος δ' Ἐρεβός τε, μελαινὰ τε Νύξ ἐγένοντο,  
Νυκτὸς δ' αὖτ' Ἀιθήρ τε καὶ Ἡμέρα ἐξέγενοντο.

On this account Aratus calls her

Ἄρχαίη Νύξ—

primeval Night, as the mother of all things, and still representative of those hidden parts of the world that are near the southern pole of the mundus. So, also, the author of the Orphic Hymn—

Νύκτα Θεῶν γενέτειραν ἀείσομαι ἦδε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.

It would seem difficult to avoid here the obvious interpretation which is, as it were, forced upon us, and so

strongly favors the idea of indefinite periods. What was this evening but the darkness of the chaos over which the Spirit hovered, and what was this first morning, but the first beams of that separating light which broke in upon it, when God said, *Let it be light and light was there.* This was the evening and this was the morning—one day. Very much depends upon the mental or conceptive position from which such a declaration is viewed, or upon our apprehension of the design for which it is made. Some would think it conclusive against all the unscriptural fancies, as they would style them, of those who hold to the indefinite periods. This mention of the evening and the morning, say they, settles the matter. It was meant to guard us against these very notions into which men would, perhaps, be led by the indefinite and unfixed sense of the word day; and therefore its evening and morning are distinctly specified—thus putting it beyond all question that a common natural day was intended, or just such a duration as we at present call by that name. But now let us take another look, and from a different stand-point. In so doing, the natural and the unnatural at once assume a different aspect. In the first place, if the mention of the morning and the evening, or the calling attention to the fact that there was a morning and an evening to this remarkable period, was for the purpose of keeping the mind from any conceptions different from that of the common solar day, or the present day, as we may better call it, the question then arises, why should we not take in the whole of the thought, or syntagma of imagined appearances, that belongs to this later name as now employed? Why should we not think of a sun-rise, of a sun-set, of a noon, of a midnight? But this we can-

not do. All such conceptions are expressly excluded by the account itself. And this furnishes a sufficient answer to the very common, and at first view, very plausible objection which we put in the words of a very late writer, as representative of the best that is generally said on the subject. "When Moses wrote the book of Genesis, the terms 'day,' 'morning' and 'evening,' conveyed to the Israelites as distinct and positive an idea of a certain duration of time, twenty-four hours, (or its equivalent he might have said,) as did the words 'man,' 'woman,' 'earth,' or 'sky,' of the things which they denote; hence, for the sacred historian to have used them in a different sense, as implying ages of time without the slightest intimation that he did so, would have been sheer deception." Now, of this, we say, in the first place, that the term *day* did not always convey to the Israelites a distinct and positive idea of a certain duration of time equivalent to twenty-four hours. In Scriptural passages, too numerous for citation, it is applied to an indefinite moral, political, or physical period far exceeding that duration. There is the day of the Lord, the day of justice or of mercy, the day of particular nations, the day of Israel, the day of Jezreel, the day of salvation, the day of Jerusalem, the day in which the Lord created the heavens and the earth, mentioned in Genesis, ii, 2, or the day of days, which the succeeding context clearly shows was meant to include all the periods, whether long or short.

But not to dwell on this, which has occupied our attention before, and which must be so familiar to every reader of the Bible, we proceed to take up the objection in its own style, and to turn upon it its own battery. Let



us introduce a slight change, which, whilst it does not alter in the least its argumentative force, sets in a striking light its utter insufficiency. It will then read after this manner—“When Moses wrote the book of Genesis, the terms ‘day,’ ‘morning,’ and ‘evening,’ conveyed to the Israelites as distinct and positive an idea of *the regular phenomenal rising and setting of the sun*, as did the words man, woman, earth, etc., of the things which they denote; hence for the sacred historian to have used them in a sense which excluded these essential accompaniments of the later idea would have been sheer deception.” The conclusion in the one case is just as good as in the other. But nothing can be more certain than that, according to the account, there could have been no visible sun, no visible sun-rise, or visible sun-set, or sun-made morning or evening, or optical meridian, or optical solar phenomenon of any kind, on that remarkable day. “*Not the slightest intimation that he did so use them.*” Such is the language of the common objection, and it seems, at first view, to present a strong and plausible front. But is it true? In the non-creation of the phenomenal sun until the fourth period, and the express declaration that it is then, for the first, appointed to be a measurer of *days* and years, is there not the “slightest intimation,” is there not an all-sufficient intimation to the reader, in the very outset, that there is something very strange, very unusual, very much out of the ordinary modes of conception in this first period,—something which, although it might have had laws of its own, was very anomalous when compared with subsequent solar days, and was only called by this name because agreeing with them in those general cyclical or periodical

resemblances of succession and vicissitude which are just as much independent of a particular duration as they are of those regular optical phenomena that we find it now so difficult to dissociate from the sun-measured idea. Had the writer given us, in the outset, a splendid description of the heavenly bodies,—as probably would have been the case in an uninspired account,—had he brought the sun, and moon, and stars, in the foreground of the picture, instead of a solitary chaotic earth, or waste of waters enveloped in a dense darkness, the objection might have been well taken. Had he used the word *day*, under such circumstances it might have been said with some truth, that there was no intimation to the contrary of its being a common, or, in other words, a solar day. Such an account too would have been very consistent in its own narrow exactness. It would have excluded all hermeneutical obscurities arising from the difficulty of presenting in human language primary facts through the necessary medium of human conceptions. It might have been very perspicuous, very easily *seen through*, very intelligible. But then it would lack, not only the mysterious grandeur of the Bible, but that higher consistency, that truthful accordance which all discovery, whether exegetical or scientific, is slowly yet surely unfolding in the old Scriptural cosmology.

“*As implying ages of time,*” says the objection. Now this is a gratuitous assumption. It might be true as alleged against the geologist; but our argument, which is wholly biblical, does not at all need to employ it, or to answer it. All that is contended for is that the Bible narration, easily and naturally interpreted, is not only silent about duration, but shuts out the idea of any

particular extent, be it longer or shorter. Not that the day had no certain duration, but that this is not of the essence of the conception. In this respect the writer himself may have had some particular view of his own, by which, however, we are not at all bound. His readers, too, in different ages, and in different circumstances of knowledge, may have had very varying conceptions as to extent, yet all agreeing in that essence which belongs to the absolute verity of the account. It may have been a very long time, or a very short time; or a very long time by one standard of measurement, and a very short time by another. All that we say is, that the account does not tell us how long the day was; while it gives us sufficient intimation that we must not attempt to confine the conception by limits that could only be assigned to it through the phenomena of subsequent measured time.

We think we have answered the objection derived from the mention of the evening and the morning. As these, whatever they were, must be independent of an actual sun-rising and sun-setting, or a solar day in its most *essential* phenomena, so, *a fortiori*, do they leave us unbound by the conception of a solar day in respect to the *less* important element, or rather the *accident* we might say, of a certain duration. But may not the mention have been made for a reason the very opposite of that which the objection supposes. Let us take a look at it from this side. Why is it said, "*there was an evening, and there was a morning*"? To keep us, we may answer, from regarding duration, or a certain duration as the main, or even any *essential* element of the idea. It was not this that made it a day, or justified the name, but the fact of its having two marked and contrasted

seasons to which the names evening and morning could be given, (especially is this said etymologically of the Hebrew words,) with as much propriety as to those that were made by the setting and rising of the sun. This was the evening, and this the morning—one day. As though the writer had said, it was this that made that day,—and had brought in the expression to guard against any misconception that might come from connecting it with any subsequent measures of time, after measured time began.

These views are strengthened by an etymological examination of the terms employed. Day and night, or the Hebrew יום and לילה are general terms, and may be taken of the times occupied by certain phenomena, as well as of the phenomena themselves. The words *evening* and *morning* (ערב and בקר) are confined mainly to the latter use. They denote, not duration of any extent, so much as the optical or physical appearances by which they are marked, or in which they commence and terminate. It is rational, therefore, to lay a stress on their phenomenal or etymological significations which might not be justified in other cases; especially when we bear in mind that they are explanatory of this word *yom*. They are used to show why it is called a day,—because divided by two contrasted states that could be characterized by no words so well as by those which are afterwards used to denote the corresponding parts of that lesser and more distinctly marked cycle, the common solar day. What makes them the more appropriate for this purpose is the fact, that when etymologically examined, they present that same primary conception to be found in the general words יום and לילה, and which

underlies our view of almost every great development in the physical world. It is called a day, because there was an *ereb* (ערב) and a *boker* (בקר)—that is a *mingling*, a *blending*, a confusion of elements, such as is previously called חֹשֶׁךְ (choshek) or the darkness that was upon the face of the deep, and this followed by a SEPARATING, a CLEAVING, a parting of elements, issuing in the first light, whether regarded optically, or in reference to its pictorial effect in marking the outlines and divisions of things; or with still more primary reference to that first action which constitutes the very potentiality of light, and makes it the great representative of the corresponding development in each of the creative periods.

And all this, we say, is confirmed by the etymological analysis of these remarkable words,—an analysis presenting no afterthought of science and philosophy, but the first fresh conceptions which the earliest mind would entertain of the primary ongoings and outgoings of nature. The word *ereb* (ערב) which is undoubtedly the mother of the Greek ἐρεβός, comes evidently from ערב to *mingle*, hence applied to the *evening*, the *blending* of the light, or that absence of the light whether conceived of as a covering, a shadow, or an absolute privation, in which all things are phenomenally *mingled* in one dark, undistinguished, undivided mass. The thought is to be traced in the derivations. From this root comes the name for the *raven*, (or the dark bird,) still preserving in our own tongue the two main radical consonants, also the name for the desert, (araba or arava,) presenting the same negative image consisting in the absence of all distinction of parts and features. The radical conception appears still more strongly in some of the cognates;

as in עָרָב, Isaiah, v, 30, from whence the noun עָרִיבָא a *dense cloud*, and that sublime word עָרָבָה employed in some of the most impressive descriptions of the Bible for the *thick darkness*, and evidently allied in its root to the Greek ὄφρανη denoting the very blackness of darkness. Our Saxon *evening* like the Greek and Latin *hesper*, has not so strong a sense, yet still preserves the same primary thought; and the same may be said of the German *abende*. It is the *evening*, the *blending*, the assimilating period; just as *blind* or *blend* denotes the obliterating of all distinction, a reducing of all things to the same dark undefinable condition. Directly opposed to this, phenomenally, is the word בָּקַר (boker). The primary sense of the verb, still existing in the Arabic, and clearly to be seen in its derivatives, is the same with that of the kindred word פָּקַע, namely, to *cleave*, to divide, to separate, and thus to *distinguish* both optically and mentally. It is the same image that is used in the Arabic of the passage we have already cited from the Koran, (p. 72,) where God is called the Lord of the day-dawning, the *day-cleaving*, the day parting, or the *day-breaking*, as we most familiarly and graphically express it in our own tongue. Hence the optical and intellectual sense of the piel conjugation, to *look keenly*, to *discriminate*, to *analyze*. The same primary idea is found in the closely allied root פָּקַע denoting to *part*, to *cleave*, to *break forth*, and hence giving rise to that very common noun signifying the *first born*, the *first fruits*, the *first going forth* of anything in the physical world, whether vegetable or animal.

Thus *ereb* and *boker* are etymologically opposed, not merely as two different *times*, not merely as light and

darkness even, but as presenting those antithetical ideas of *blending* and *separation*, into which expressions for the phenomena of light and darkness are ultimately, and, perhaps, in all languages, capable of being resolved. Ordinarily it would not be proper to insist so much on primary etymological senses, and run the risk, by so doing, of carrying an obsolete conception into some subsequent well understood meaning of a term. But in cases like this, where everything depends upon getting the right conceptive stand point, and where, too, the matters treated of are so entirely out of the ordinary track, it becomes the part of sober hermeneutics to make use of all elements that enter, in any manner, into the radical ideas of the words.

The force of these remarks would be more strongly felt, had we been accustomed in our translation to some other words, built, indeed, on the very same idea, yet presenting more of the phenomenal conception, or in which it had become less obsolete in subsequent usage. Had it been written for us in our Bibles, and thus become familiar to us from our infancy, "there was a *blending* and a *parting*, there was a *darkness* and a *day break*, a *dusk* and a *dawning*, a *covering* and a *de-velopment*—all of which have a similar etymological meaning, —there would have been less thought of the fixed time of a common solar day; and the mind would more easily and naturally have received the notion of indefinite periods, as not only meeting the hermeneutical exigencies, but as being in harmony with what would be deeply felt to be the ruling spirit of the passage. Take another kindred set of expressions. There was a *gloom*, and there was a *gleam*, or *gleaming*. No two words

would have answered better than these, not only as denoting the most direct contrast, but as both springing out of one root which may be regarded as presenting the synthesis of the two ideas, or the beginning of that motion in nature, on one side of which lies the involving darkness, and on the other the evolving light—on the one side the dense covering, and on the other the first *glimpse* of development.

There is a peculiarity, too, in the style, or order of the expression, on which it may be worth our while to dwell. There was an evening, and there was a morning. It may strike others very differently, but in our own mind we must confess to a strong impression of intended indefiniteness, arising, as it seems to us, from the very strangeness of the language. The expressions are very peculiar; in fact, *sui generis*. The morning and the evening of a common solar day would not have been thus set forth. It is never thus set forth in any other part of the Old Testament. The emphasis and order of the language seem to have respect to the query that might be supposed to arise most naturally in the reader's mind,—How could this strange sunless day have any analogy with the other periods now called by that name? Neither the question nor the answer would have been suggested had there been no doubt of its being the common diurnal time. But they have a sublime propriety when used in connection with the other idea. And then the asserting substantive verbs are so formally repeated—“*there was an evening, and there was a morning*”—as though it were intended to make *succession* of events, independent of any particular duration, the essential and prominent thought. There had been pictured to us the



chaos; there is then presented the going forth of the brooding, vivifying spirit upon the dark waters of the abyss; this is followed by its first-born, the Light; and then, to prevent all misconception, we have what follows, as though the writer would answer the silent query—“*This* was the evening, and *this* was the morning,” or “*thus* there was an evening, and *thus* there was a morning—one day.”

The expression יום אֶחָד, *day one*, is generally explained as equivalent to *first day*, on the ground of a Hebrew idiom which sometimes employs the first cardinal number for an ordinal. And yet there would seem to be something peculiar about it, which such explanation does not fully meet. In the case of the other days, the common ordinals are employed; and, corresponding to them, we should have had, in this place, רִשְׁאוֹן instead of אֶחָד, had it not been intended to convey the idea of something anomalous in the first period, as an intimation, perhaps, that such character belonged to them all. In regard to this thought, there is a very suggestive passage, Zachariah, xiv, 6, 7. “And it shall come to pass in that day that the light shall not be clear nor dark.” It is not necessary for the present argument to dwell on the many interpretations that have been given of this verse. But the one that follows, besides being very remarkable in itself, strikingly suggests the passage before us in Genesis—“And it shall be *one day*, which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night, but it shall come to pass that in the evening time there shall be light.” Various views have been taken of this strange language. The words, *not day nor night*, have been well supposed to denote a period which shall not be

marked by these vicissitudes as they are now made by the sun. The expression, "in the evening there shall be light," calls also to mind the great first day of creation in which the evening was the forerunner of the dawn. But the main resemblance is in the words  $\text{יָמֵי הַיּוֹם}$ , which are precisely the same, and in a similar connection, in Zachariah and Genesis. In the Prophecy it most evidently denotes a *peculiar* day, a day differing much from common days; and we are strongly inclined to the same interpretation here, instead of the usual one which would take the cardinal number simply as an ordinal. Some of the Fathers were struck by this language in Genesis, and were led, on account of it, to regard the first day as somehow including all the rest,—being, in fact, the *day of days* mentioned in the beginning of the second chapter, or the "day in which God made the heavens and the earth." Their interpretation is of little value philologically, for they were poor Hebraists; but it is of importance to show how much these early commentators were led to regard these days as anomalous, and how little they were inclined to be limited by any narrow twenty-four hour hypothesis.

In connection with this it is important also to bear in mind the interpretation of Josephus (*Antiq.* Book I. Ch. 1.)—"And this was the first day; but Moses called it *one day*, the cause of which I am able to give even now, but shall put off its exposition until another time." The promised explanation is nowhere else furnished to us; but this is sufficient to show that he regarded the account as anomalous. There must have been something in the style, something on the face of the narration which led him to this; since in this case, as well as in that of the

Fathers, there were no questions of science to affect his mind. The ordinal interpretation of the first numeral, which is required in certain examples, must have been known to him as an accurate Hebraist; but he evidently does not regard it as sufficient to satisfy that feeling of mysteriousness that comes to the mind from the whole air and aspect of this wondrous pictorial representation of ineffable facts.

We do not wish to cheat ourselves, or bewilder our readers, with mere etymological distinctions; but the primary images, as we have given them, are certainly in the roots of the Hebrew words for evening and morning. These words do doubtless come to be used afterward without much reference to the first conceptions. Such is the case with all pictorial language. But, then, these conceptive images must once have been fresh in the mind; they must, at some date, have been vivid elements in human speech; or we cannot account for their origin, or the remarkable tenacity with which they still hold their place in almost all known languages. If there ever was a case in which the writer would have them in his own thought, or would desire that they might be in the thought of the reader, this certainly would have its claim to be regarded as one of the kind. The nature of the morning and the evening give character to the day, instead of being themselves determined by a previously assumed hypothesis of its being a common day, or having a certain duration. But why, then, use the word day at all? On this question we hope to satisfy our readers in another part of the argument, when we come to speak of the solar day itself as brought out in the work of the fourth period.

To proceed, however, with the examination in its present order,—the preceding, or primeval night, when darkness was upon the face of the abyss, has certainly every appearance of indefiniteness. The whole aspect, too, of the account seems designed to fix that impression on the mind. It was a starless, moonless night, unmarked in its commencement, and unmeasured by any periods or cycles known to modern science, or now presented in any phenomena of the natural world. There were no hours, no minutes, no divisions that could be connected with any terrestrial or cosmical standard. There were no “watches of that night,” unless it be such as the Psalmist speaks of, in which a millenium of our current solar years may have been no more than the seemingly fleeting moment that just precedes the dawn. Such was this unmeasured night, and the morning spoken of was its termination. That morning, be it remembered, was not the beginning but the close of the first day, or, at all events, the commencement of its latter period. And so it was in each successive creative day until the end of the sixth, and the commencement of the seventh, when God rested from his ‘*work of creation*,’ and the great hebdomad, or *fullness of days*, winds up in that blessed ‘*work of providence*’ which He hath worked and worketh hitherto in the present Sabbath of the world.

And here is the place for the examination of a question which has been for some time pressing upon us, and must have suggested itself to the mind of almost every reader. *What was the commencement of this first day?* Most evidently the night constitutes the earlier portion, because mentioned first in the order of succession. But

when did this night begin? From what point are its hours, its watches, its midnight, its ante-meridian and post-meridian divisions to be reckoned? On the hypothesis of the common solar day, or its equivalent in duration, this beginning must have been just twelve hours before the light which constitutes the morning. But now three questions force themselves upon the mind,—Was there light before this twelve hours? or was there darkness? or was there nothing at all? If we say the first, then must there have been a preceding day; if the second, then the night did not *then* begin, or we have a commencement entirely arbitrary, assigned to a moment differing in no respect, either essential or phenomenal, from those that precede or follow it. If we give the third answer, it seems inconsistent with both the letter and spirit of the second verse—*And darkness WAS* (חָשֶׁךְ) *or had been upon the face of the waters*—implying the previous existence of that on which the darkness then rested, and had been resting, at the moment when this first night begins. If we shrink from the absurdity of a mere arbitrary commencement thus estimated from a date with nothing to distinguish it from what comes immediately before or after, there is no way to avoid it except by adopting the indefinite view, which is pressed by none of these narrow difficulties, or else by boldly taking the ground that the very matter, or dynamical entity, of the earth and the heavens came into existence just twelve hours, neither more nor less, before the shining of the light which made the first morning of our world. It may be said that this nice computation of twelve hours, or of a duration exactly equivalent to twelve hours, seems like trifling with the greatness of the

subject, and the sublime language of the account. The writer feels it, and admits it. But then, does not all this incongruity, and apparent belittling of the Mosaic idea, come directly from the attempt to confine our conceptions within the narrow limits of the twenty-four hour theory? It is wholly at war, we say, with the natural feeling that arises in the mind on reading this super-humanly grand description of the origin of our world—*And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was resting upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God was brooding upon the waters.* Who shall think of an exact twelve hours here, unless compelled by words or language utterly incapable of any other interpretation. But there is no such limiting language in the passage, and the subsequent terms that might seem to suggest our modern measurements must be controlled by those first impressions that are made upon the soul in the introductory statements of this wondrous narrative. Instead of limitation of any kind, we cannot keep out of our thoughts the conceptions of vastness every way, vastness in the trine aspect of the idea, vastness of *space* in the image of the illimitable waters, vastness of *degree* in the conceived grandeur of the work, and along with these will come in the conception of vastness of *duration*. It is essential to the harmony of the idea. It is that third element of dimension without which God's work appears but as a phantom of width and altitude, instead of the full complement of being that the divinely given law of our thinking demands. It is thus that the opening picture gives character to all the rest. The feeling of the vast, the indefinite, the unmeasured, once received into the soul is carried naturally through all the other periods.

It is in these first verses we should look for the key which is to guide us in the interpretation of all the rest. The day and the night, the evening and the morning, instead of being limited by the later and necessarily inadequate conceptions, are to be taken from the larger and grander scale furnished to our survey from this primitive stand-point. Under such a guidance, the reader who will carefully study the whole account cannot fail to see that each transition is from a lower or less perfect to a higher and more perfect state. Each is marked by the introduction of some new thing, or by some *separation* or dividing of a higher and higher element of being from the old chaos; and this, in such a way, that each former or preparatory state is the night to the cycle, the evening or comparatively chaotic *ereb* to the higher condition which next dawns upon the world. Nor is this merely poetical. The conceptions, as we have shown, are inherent in the primary images of the words, more deeply grounded in them, and in this sense *older* than the subordinate idea of some exactly measured duration.

Each new element, too, or new *division*, though gradual in its after working, has a sudden and preternatural beginning, like the first glance of the light out of chaos, or over chaos, and therefore most appropriately called a *morning*, a *boker*, (בֹקֵר) a *separating*, a *parting*, a *looking forth*. It is a *saltus*, or *leap*, in nature, when God's disturbing voice is heard calling forth some new thing, and lo, it awakes from the long sleep of natural causation; "*it stands up*," as the prophet most sublimely paints it, and with the same allusion, as we may think, to the primary images of the words—"I call to them, they stand up." That voice was uttered in each of the

creative processes, and will be uttered again when the declaration shall go forth, "Lo, I make all things new." The same voice which said, "Let there be light, and there was light," is repeated in each of these supernatural mornings, and there is the same instant obedience, the same beginning of something in nature which was not in nature before,—accompanied, perhaps, by most sudden and wonderful changes, and then followed again by a long rest, sleep, or night, as we may call it, of nature's tardy growth.

This is the conclusion to which geology is fast coming. Although it is intended to make our argument purely exegetical, unwarped by anything that science has discovered, or may yet discover, still would we acknowledge the essential aid which in this respect geology is rendering to these most important ideas of revelation. Infidel as her spirit often is, she is driven more and more to acknowledge, as the only theory that will solve phenomena, and, therefore, as the only one that can be truly called *inductive*, the mixture of the natural and the supernatural, in the production of our earth. As surely as there is written on the rocks the long working of regular uninterrupted laws or methods, in which each step or stage *seems* to come out of what went before and to have given birth to what comes after, (for this is the only consistent meaning we can attach to the word *natural*,) so surely is there found there another record as strongly, and we may even say more unmistakeably engraved. From a higher world than the natural, there must have been from time to time a sudden flashing in of the *extraordinary*, of the supernatural, of a new morning after the long night of nature, or, in other words, the Divine



power introducing, or *bringing out*, if any prefer the term, a new element, a new force, a new law, a new idea, call it what you will, accompanied with new methods or laws for its subsequent *growth* or development, and then leaving it to their undisturbed operation.

The two extreme views alike fail in explaining the appearances. We find insuperable difficulties, whether we suppose an uninterrupted nature, on the one hand, or a succession of supernatural acts following each other in direct and almost simultaneous succession, on the other. Science and Scripture do certainly present a remarkable agreement in the order of these great *creative acts*, or these great anomalous *developments*. Setting aside the question of duration, the harmony in other aspects is so striking that we might well suspect a forced accommodation if the exceeding antiquity of the record had not been placed beyond all cavil. Whilst thus strangely agreeing, however, in the wonderful steps through which creation rose from chaos to a state of life and order, they are both alike silent in respect to the actual or comparative length of the intervening chasms of duration. They do not tell us either how long they were, as measured by our solar cycles, or how short they may have been in comparison with some longer æons or ages of the universe. The Scripture calls them days. The two contrasted times, in each, of supernatural action and natural repose, it most graphically represents as an evening and a morning. The Hebrew, or still older Syriac, had no other words so well adapted to this purpose, whether we regard the essential idea or the etymological metaphor. But certainly they could have been no common days, no common nights, no common morn-

ings. This, we think, must appear from the whole spirit and aspect of the strange account. They were God's days, his  $\text{מִיּוֹם אֶל מִיּוֹם}$  or *dies eternitatis*. They were the morning and evening intervals of His creative periods, as much beyond our diurnal cycles as His ways are above our ways and His thoughts above our thoughts, — above them in all the trine aspects of greatness, — as measureless in their duration as in their space and power.

It is a proper place to remark here, in passing, that such use of day rather than year, or month, or century, to denote indefinite time, or an age, is a peculiarity of many, perhaps, we might say, of most languages. Every scholar must be familiar with it in the Latin. *DIES* is for *tempus*. Thus Livy — *Dies tempusque lenit iram*. It is employed in a still wider sense, yet preserving the same old cyclical idea, for the present life, the present world, the present state of being, as one of the “days of eternity,” as an *olam* of the great *olam*. Hence the phrase, *venire in diem*, to be *born*, or *come into the world*. As another example from the Hebrew, we need only cite the sublime passage in which the Prophet employs this same radical conception in his attempt to set forth the absolute eternity of Jehovah.  $\text{מִיּוֹם אֶל מִיּוֹם הָיָא}$ . “Before me there was no God, and after me there shall be no other. *Before the day, I am HE.*” That is, before time existed —  $\text{ἐξ ἀρχῆς}$  — *ab initio* — as it is rendered by the Alexandrian translator, and in the commentaries of Jerome.

But to return to our creative divisions. There is first the parting of the light; next the division of the lighter fluids or atmosphere; next the elimination of the solid from the fluid; next the morning of vegetable life; then

the arrangements for the regular divisions of time by the celestial luminaries ; then the birth of the lower forms of reptile life which the waters are made to bring forth ; then the dawn of the higher animate existence, terminating in the rational or human, and immediately following this, the Sabbath eve, whose long expected morning, although it may have begun to dawn, has not yet arisen in its full splendour upon our world.

## CHAPTER X.

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### WORK OF THE SECOND DAY.

#### THE FIRMAMENT.

CREATION OF THE FIRMAMENT.—SCIENTIFIC OBJECTION.—IGNORANCE OF MOSES. THE FACT.—THE CONCEPTION OF THE FACT.—PHENOMENAL LANGUAGE.—SCIENTIFIC LANGUAGE.—CHANGES IN ASTRONOMICAL LANGUAGE.—IN OPTICAL AND CHEMICAL LANGUAGE.—SUPERIORITY OF THE BIBLE LANGUAGE.—NEVER BECOMES OBSOLETE.—THE OBJECTION LIES AS WELL TO MANY OTHER PARTS OF THE SCRIPTURE.—EXAMPLES FROM NEW TESTAMENT.—LANGUAGE OF PROPHECY.—TIME-WORDS OF PROPHECY.—ANALOGOUS LANGUAGE IN RESPECT TO THE HUMAN BODY.—ILLUSTRATION FROM PSALM CXXXIX.—THE HEBREW WORD FOR FIRMAMENT.—THE PHYSICAL PROCESS IT REPRESENTS.—COMPARISON WITH SCIENTIFIC LANGUAGE.—THE LATTER ALSO PHENOMENAL.

WE have in the next verses what has seemed to many the great difficulty, the almost insuperable stumbling block of this Mosaic account.

“And God said, Let there be a firmament between the waters, and let it divide the waters. And God made the firmament; and he divided between the waters which were above the firmament, and the waters which were beneath the firmament, and it was so. And God called the firmament heavens; and there was an evening and there was a morning—second day.” Genesis, i, 6, 7, 8.

We anticipate the anxious enquiry that has pressed, and is yet pressing, on many minds bewildered by false biblical views and the false claims of modern science. How is this to stand with the present state of knowledge? Here, they would say, we have most palpably

presented the old erroneous conception of a material sky, or solid firmament, with a reservoir of water above separated from the waters below. It is the same image we have in Job, xxxvii, 18, of the heavens being spread out as a "molten looking-glass," or in Isaiah, xl, 22, where the Prophet compares them to a pitched tent. It is, says the objector, the child's conception of the phenomena; it might do for the childhood of the world, but it will not do for men of science, or a scientific age.

Now, we may say, in the language of Job to one of his vaunting comforters, — "Who knoweth not all this?" The amount of it is, that the language presents appearances, and not the interior truths or facts, whatever they may be. Certain facts in the process and order of creation are to be narrated, and these facts are named, in the only way they could be named, from the phenomena they outwardly present; and these phenomena, again, are named in the use of the articulate language, whether direct or metaphorical, which custom, or accident, or knowledge, or imagination, or any other cause, had attached to them. "Who knoweth not all this?" we, too, may say it to the objector who parades his little science against the Scriptures. Perhaps we may also venture the opinion that Moses knew it too; that is, he may have known that his words were phenomenal. He may have used the language of his day very much as we use it, or as we use our own, without feeling himself called upon to enter a caveat against mistakes of its conceptional meaning. Or he may have been partially ignorant, knowing less than we do about the matter and more than the primitive men, from whom came down the language he was compelled to employ. Or he may have

been wholly ignorant, and known no difference between the absolute *fact* or truth he was made the medium of setting forth, and the phenomenal *conception* by which it was represented in his own mind, or the mind of his age. The principle is still the same, whether there be a wide difference between the *fact* and the *conception* of the fact, or a less difference; for difference there will be even to the highest science; and it cannot be a matter of degree.

The *fact*, which God's wisdom deemed it necessary to reveal to mankind, was this,—that in the period after the first division or separation of the light, or fire, the next supernatural or creative step in the series, was the evolving, from the yet semi-chaotic world, of what we now call the atmosphere, but which Moses describes by language less scientifically correct, although, in fact, no more phenomenal than that which we are still compelled to use. The chronological order of the fact was the great truth, and to the knowledge of this no science ever has attained, or would have attained, without revelation. The event itself was the origination and completion of that apparatus of physical law, or that physical state of things, be it scientifically whatever it may—for we do not yet know in all respects what it is—by which were produced the combined appearances of the clouds, the rain, the blue heavens, together with other *outward* revealing phenomena connected with, and representative of, such interior causality. The beginning of this was the second supernatural act in the series of creations, or *divisions*. No working or development of any previously organized nature would ever have produced it. Without this new creative energy, the earth would never have

gone beyond the first day's progress. It would never have had an atmosphere, or clouds, or rain, or arched firmament; but must have continued, in these respects, in that same state in which astronomy makes it probable that some bodies in the solar and stellar systems may yet remain. That this then took place, or began to take place, and that it was the divinely caused change of the second creative period, is the *fact* revealed. Moses describes it, not only in the only way he could describe it, but in the only way in which he and others of his age could *conceive* it. This fact was represented to his mind very much as it is still represented to our minds, with all our boasted science, namely, by the very appearances or phenomena through which he sets it forth. When we let go these phenomena, or dismiss them from our thoughts, and talk of rarefactions and condensations, and reflections and refractions, and specific gravities, we have scientific formulas, and scientific symbols, but hardly any *conceptions* whatever. The more scientific our statements, the more abstract and the more conceptionless are they, until in this respect the language becomes almost as unpictorial, as unimaginative, as that of the mathematician, or of the analytical astronomer who regards the heavens only as furnishing convenient diagrams for his calculus of functions and forces, or abstract dynamical entities. Now, in the Mosaic account the phenomenal is every where, and everything. It is addressed directly to the senses, or to the intellect through the senses. It sets forth the origin, not of what *is* in itself, but of what we see, and as we see it, — τὰ βλεπόμενα, τὰ φαινόμενα, (Hebrews, xi, 3,) — “the things that are *seen*,” or “the things that do *appear*,” as representa-

tive, τῶν νοουμένων, of the powers that are *understood* or believed to exist back of them, and which will still exist back of them, however much our phenomenal language may be changed or improved by the progress of science. Thus, when we say, the blue sky,—one of the results of an atmosphere, and without which in the present state of things the heavens above us would be as dark as Erebus,—when we talk of the vault of heaven spread out like a molten mirror, or

“Like an ocean hung on high,”—

when we fancy the clouds sailing in it like vessels filled with fluid, and the waters above as appearing to descend out of a reservoir from which the waters below seem parted by these phenomenal heavens, we have the images or pictures presented to the mind by the articulate Hebrew words employed. But it should be remembered that in this—as in fact in almost all other use of language, even the most common language—there is a second stage in the process. The articulate or written words *present* the phenomena; but the phenomena, too, are a language; and they present, or rather *re-present* to those who *understand* (however partially or obscurely they may understand them, and whether by faith or science,) the otherwise ineffable fact or facts that stand behind, far behind, it may be, infinitely behind, these primal appearances, these first universally known letters in the alphabet of God’s speech to man. We say *otherwise* ineffable, for it cannot be too often repeated that science, after all, can herself make the revelation in no other way. She only, as she advances, substitutes other and more interior phenomena in place of the outward,



the earlier, the simpler, the more vivid, which she casts away with so much scorn.

Still the ultimate fact or power is *ineffable*, and to a higher science in some most remote *yom olam*, or latter "day of eternity," the language of our books may actually appear as childlike, as erroneous, as that of Moses and Job does to a savan of the 19th century. We may even say more errōneous; for the language of science when it fails, or has become obsolete, exhibits always the appearance of childish folly and pretense, whereas that drawn from primal and universal phenomena never loses its early bloom and manliness. Who can help feeling how much more truthful, as well as more dignified, is the language of Moses than would have been the cycles and epicycles, and other technics of the exploded Ptolemaic science? Ages hence, too, how much more truthful may it be felt to be, than our gravities, our centripetal and centrifugal forces, our nebular condensations, or any of those once lauded terms which a future astronomy or meteorology may lay away among the rubbish of almost forgotten centuries.

Science has indeed enlarged our field of thought, and for this we will be thankful to God and to scientific men. But what is it, after all, that she has given us, or can give us, but a knowlege of phenomena -- of *appearances*? What are her boasted laws, but generalizations of such phenomena ever resolving themselves into some one great fact, that *seems* to be an original energy, whilst evermore the application of a stronger lens to our analytical telescope resolves such seeming primal force into an *appearance*, a manifestation of something still more remote, which, in this way, and in this way alone,

reveals its presence to our senses. Thus the course of human science has ever been the substitution of one set of conceptions for another. Firmaments have given place to concentric spheres, spheres to empyreans, empyreans to cycles and epicycles, epicycles to vortices, vortices to gravities and fluids ever demanding for the theoretic imagination other fluids as the only conditions on which their action could be made *conceivable*.

And this process is still going on. In the primitive times the sun *appeared*, and was *understood*, perhaps, to revolve round the earth. Very early—we know not how early—came the oriental theory which was afterwards held by Pythagoras. This, like the modern Copernican, put the sun in the centre, although it did not maintain itself against the more common hypothesis that claimed to be grounded on observation and induction. Later astronomy, however, reversed the decision. It placed the sun again in the centre; and now it was thought we had at last reached a fixed fact in the universe. But alas for the doctrine that would maintain that “anything stands” and that all things are not eternally moving, a science still more modern is displacing this once immovable centre for some other and immensely more remote pivot of revolution. There is no end to this,—no end in theory—and the present scientific view of some great millennial or millio-millennial period will only stand because the shortness of human observation, even continued during the age of the race, can get no visible data for anything beyond it.

Thus, also, in regard to the phenomena of light. The earliest Hebrew conception was that of *horns*, or simple radiations diverging from a point, such as the Prophet

Habakkuk speaks of (iii, 4) — “ His brightness was as the light ; he had horns (𐤇𐤍𐤁𐤏, Greek, κέρατα or κεραυνοί,) coming out of his hands, and there was the hiding of his power.”\* Science has long been in search of this hidden power. The old phenomenal κέρατα, or diverging pencils, gave way to the effluxes, or diaphanous fluids of the Greek physics ; they came back again in the optical radii of the Newtonians, to be again superseded by what is in substance the old Aristotelian hypothesis returning in the undulating or wave theory.

There has been a similar process in the department of pneumatology. Common air was at first supposed to be the most subtile of all material substances, — if material substance it was — and was, therefore, taken as the best representative of spirit or immateriality. It furnished that conception — not the *idea* or notion, which is a very different thing — but that *conception* of soul or spirit which is to be found in the roots of almost every language. Next came the æther, the quintessence, or fifth element. In more modern times, electricity and magnetism are the great words of ignorance as well as of science ; and these, in turn, are yielding to that unknown fluid in which it is supposed will be found the elemental unity of all force. By a like process the old element, fire, became transmuted into phlogiston, and phlogiston into the modern caloric. But we are still no nearer the remote primal fact or facts, although a vast amount of useful knowledge

\* We have the verb, Exodus, xxxiv, 29, xxx, 35, where it is said, “ The face of Moses *shone* ” — most strangely rendered *cornutum* (horned) by the Vulgate. The same sense is given by Aquila. The true rendering in Habakkuk, iii, 8, should have been, “ He had rays or flashes from his hands.” Hence the Greek κεραυνοί.

has been obtained in the process. Each of these conceptions may embrace phenomena not *conceived* before, and thus each may seem comparatively interior; but they are all yet upon the outside, and we may say, equally upon the outside, in respect to the great truth or truths they represent. They are all phenomenal, or conceptual. They are all alike the outward signs of the things unseen (τὰ νοούμενα)—of hidden powers or truths which we may receive by reason and by revelation, but which eye cannot see, nor any sense *perceive*, neither can it enter into the imagination, or imaging faculty, of man ever to *conceive*.

If, then, absolute correctness of representation is aimed at, a revelation of God's creative acts could no more endorse one scientific theory than another. What would now have been the credit of the Scriptures, had they been written in the style of the Aristotelian or Ptolemaic science, which in its day, perhaps, was thought to be the ne plus ultra of astronomical truth?—a system so far complete that if it did not contain all the facts, it was supposed, at least, to furnish the best language, and the best method, through which they could be represented. And yet this grand old Book of God still stands, and will continue to stand, though science and philosophy are ever changing their countenances and passing away. It is one of the few things in our world that never becomes obsolete. It speaks the language of all ages, and is adapted to all climes. Ever clear and ever young, it has the same power for the later as for the early mind; it is as much the religious vernacular of the occidental as of the oriental races. Instead, then, of being its defect, it is its great, its divine wisdom, that it commits

itself to no scientific system or scientific language, whilst yet it brings before the mind those primal facts which no science can ever reach, and for this purpose uses those first vivid conceptions which no changes in science and no obsolescence in language can ever wholly impair.

The wonder is that such objections should have been so pertinaciously made against one or two parts of the Bible, when they may be taken almost everywhere; or that good men, and learned men, should condemn as unnatural a mode of interpretation in Genesis which they employ with so much ease, and without any consciousness of its being forced, in so many other passages of the Scriptures. This kind of phenomenal language (we use the term here in distinction from the poetical or confessedly figurative) pervades every part of the Bible. We can hardly read a chapter without meeting with it. "Our Father in *the Heavens*." The latter word is the antithesis of earth; and so we all understand it, although there may have been originally accompanying this plural form of expression the conception of a heaven above the visible heavens, and which was the peculiar abode of God. So, also, we are told, John, xvii, 1, "Jesus lifted up his eyes *to Heaven* and said;" again, Luke, ix, 16, "He took the bread and looked *up to Heaven*, and brake and blessed." This is not only the language of *words*, but of *action*, of sacred action, too, which can in no sense be regarded as an accommodation to vulgar prejudices. It came from the same conception, and that conception still continues, and will continue, although we understand by faith of Scripture (Psalm cxxxix, 9, 10, Jeremiah, xxiii, 24) as well as by the deductions of reason, that God is everywhere. But this had become

the language and attitude of prayer, and what pious soul would part with its touching vividness for all that science had ever taught, or philosophy dreamed, in opposition to the literal image it conveyed. Thus freely and rationally do we deal with other parts of the Bible; but when we come to Genesis, all is reversed. The day shall have its exact twenty-four hours of the same length as those that are measured by our modern clocks; the morning and the evening shall be the same that are now made by our rising and setting suns; the heavens shall mean all that astronomy would include within the term, and all the stars and stellar systems they contain shall have their creation cotemporaneous with our earth, and all finished within the period of one literal week; or, if we cannot bring ourselves to admit a literal firmament, some Hutchinsonian theory must be brought in as much at war with the simplicity and dignity of the Bible, as it is in the face of all fair science.

What is still more strange—it will in general be found that those who take the most capricious freedom in extending the prophetic symbols of the future, are the most narrow in their interpretations of this mysterious record of the equally mysterious past. The “evening and the morning” of Daniel’s vision\* are very readily

\* It does not appear in our translation of Daniel, viii, 14, that the words there rendered “days” are exactly the phrase in Genesis—“a morning and an evening.” So, also, in the same chapter, v, 26, the whole prediction is called “the vision of the morning and the evening.” We do not pretend to interpret the passage; but is it extravagant to suppose, that in both cases the same strange language is used for the same purpose,—namely, to take from the reader’s mind the idea of ordinary days, and suggest the thought of some unusual and higher cycles?

interpreted, as having a vastly extended or æonian sense. There, and in the Revelations, there is no difficulty in taking days for years, and years for ages, if need be; whilst in Genesis the same interpreters will hear to nothing but the ordinary clock measured times,—and that, too, notwithstanding that in the former cases the warrant for the wider meaning is far less clear than that which may be fairly drawn from the whole spirit and aspect of this mysterious history of the ante-Adamic periods. Rapid and brief as is the account, the spirit of vastness, as we may soberly call it, breathes in every part; and yet prophecy is rolled out to millenia, whilst in opposition to all analogy, creation, with its stupendous changes and grand series of developments, is shut up to a time less than that required for the germination of a plant, or the growth of the foetus in the womb.

And here, although it may seem somewhat out of place in our direct argument, we may be permitted to dwell on the somewhat analogous language of the Scripture in relation to the growth of the human foetus.

If it be objected to the comparison, that creation is a confessedly supernatural act, while generation is a natural process, we can only answer that in Scripture the same formative language is applied to the origin of the world as to the origin and growth of the body. Thus, in Jeremiah, i, 4, “*Before I formed thee in the womb.*” The word נִצַּרְתִּי, here employed, has more of the idea of fabrication, or direct workmanship, than either נִפְּחָה or נִבְּרָה, as in Psalm xciv, 9, יִצַּרְתָּ אֵינָן, “He that *formed* the eye, shall he not see?” It is the same word used, Genesis, ii, 19,—“And the Lord God *formed* man (וַיִּצַּרְהוּ) from the dust of the earth.” So, also, “He who *formed* the

mountains, and created the wind," Amos, iv, 13. "He who is the former of all," Jeremiah, x, 16, הַיֹּצֵר הַכֹּל הוּא. God not only created our generic humanity in the beginning, but also originates the individual life, and in certain respects regulates and fashions the individual growth. Perhaps, if we knew all about it, we might say that in this subordinate φύσις, *growth, nature*, γένεσις, *generation*, הַיְלֵלָה—all which words present radically the same conception—there is also a mixture of the natural and supernatural, analogous to that which took place in the mundane work. There are the *days* or periods of *quickenings*, and then, supervening on them, a season or seasons of repose, in which physical law, the physical law both of the material and the sentient nature, carries on the processes thus begun, or thus renewed. As the foetus grows in this *hidden world*, which the Psalmist compares to the "lowest parts of the earth," there is doubtless a most important part performed by nature. She is its nursing mother, her powers are its aliment, her laws its silent fashioners. And yet, if we would avoid the grossest materialism, we must conclude that there are some things, even in this seemingly *natural* process, which nature never could have done, —something to which all her chemistry, and all her laws of physical life, could never have given the beginning of existence. "For thou hast possessed my reins. Thou didst *overshadow*\* me in my mother's womb. I will praise

\* *Thou didst overshadow*, Hebrew, הַסְבִּינִי. The word here is very remarkable. The Hebrew strikingly corresponds to the Greek word used (Luke, i, 35) in the announcement of the immaculate conception—ἡ δούαμις Ἰψίστου ἐπισκιάσει σοι. It signifies to *overshadow*, or to cover like an *overshadowing*; Luther renders it—Du warest über mir im Mutterleibe.



Thee, O Lord, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My bone was not hid from thee,—that

The LXX translate it—'Αντελάβου μου ἐκ γαστρὸς μητρὸς μου; in which it has been followed by the Syriac and the Vulgate. The true idea, however, of the Hebrew is easily obtained from its applications in other places. It is used directly for covering with a shadow, Job, xl, 22. It is the common word to express the overshadowing of the cherubim when they spread their wings over the mercy seat. It suggests here, as well as in Luke, i, 35, the Hovering or Overshadowing Spirit that brooded over the dark chaotic waters in the foetal inception of our world. Certainly it is something more than mere fancy that traces this remarkable image in all these passages where there is thus spoken of the origination of a new life, whether *in* nature, or *out* of nature, or *through* nature, or by a direct addition of something to which the previous nature never could have given birth.

With all reverence would we tread upon this most sacred ground, and yet without profanity may it be suggested, that the immaculate conception has some resemblance, or analogy, to the human generation. The one was all divine; the other is partially so. One is the beginning of a new humanity mysteriously connected with the old; the other is the repeated quickening of the old manhood, requiring in every case the supernatural interposition of the Father of Spirits, at least, as regards the rational and moral life. As far as any danger of materialism is concerned, we might safely hold with Tertulian, and *partially* with Augustine, the doctrine of spiritual traduction; but we think the force of certain expressions in the Scriptures is against it. It may be maintained, too, that the corresponding terms, when used of the new spiritual birth, are not mere illustrative similes, but present the truest conception of the absolute fact. "Behold, in iniquity was I formed, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Nature's work was spiritually marred and ruined; but it is God who *creates* the clean heart, and renovates the quickened spirit. We may not understand, or be able to explain all these terms, but we are safe in calling it a new, an added *life*, in distinction from a mere regulative process, whether moral or physical, regarded as going on in the old nature.

frōm which I was made and curiously wrought in the lowest part of the earth\*. My substance yet unwrought† did thine eyes behold, and in thy book were they all written, even *the days*‡ (the periods) in which they were formed, when as yet there was none of them," Psalms, cxxxix, 13, etc. May we not soberly think that in this wonderful passage there is a parallel presented between the embryo and the terrestrial creation; and that in the overshadowing divinity, the unwrought substance, the curiously *divided* or embroidered work, and the book-*recorded days* of the one, we have allusions to the hovering or brooding Spirit, the watery chaos, the varied architectonical divisions, and the grand periods of the other?

But it is time to return to our regular interpretation. With the remarks that have been made, we do not hesitate to admit, to the fullest extent, the strictly phenomenal nature of the language employed in this account of the work of the second period, or the scientific error, be it

\*This is taken by some in the same manner as the expression, τὰ κατώτερα μέγη τῆς γῆς, Ephesians, iv, 9, for "this lower world," in distinction from the heavens; but the simile given by the other rendering suits best the whole spirit of the passage.

† Hebrew, גְּלִימִי. From the use of the verb, 2 Kings, ii, 8, and the related noun גְּלִימֵי, Ezekiel, xxvii, 4, we might conclude that the best sense for this was *involucrum*. By the Rabbins it is used for *mass*. LXX render it ἀκατέργαστον, almost identical in meaning with the term ἀκατασκευάστον, applied to the earth, Genesis, i, 12. Vulgate—*imperfectum meum, my unwrought*. Symmachus—ἀμόρφωτον, *my unformed, or formless, or chaotic substance*.

‡ Hebrew, יָמֵי בְּרִי. Luther—*Und waren alle Tage auf dein Buch geschrieben*. Vulgate—*Diés formabantur*. Rosenmüller—*Non uno momento, sed progressu temporis—de die in diem—ex informe mole*.

more or less, contained in it. And God said, יהי רקיע — γεννηθήτω στερέωμα—*fiat firmamentum—sit expansum*,—“let there be a firmament,” etc. The Hebrew word primarily denotes something *expanded*, or *beaten out*, like a metallic plate, (Exodus, xxxix, 3, Numbers, xvii, 4.) Such is the literal sense of the root from which it comes, and such, too, is the suggested sense of the Greek στερέωμα and the Latin *firmamentum*. They denote solidity, but this belongs only to the phenomenal conception such as is also presented in the ὕψανῶ πολυχάλκω and οὐρανῶ σιδηρέῳ, of Homer. We would, however, have no right to infer from this that Moses believed in a vaulted solidity, although such an admission would not in the least affect our argument. This language, like all the rest, is phenomenal. It presents the appearance, and Moses uses the appearance as the name or representative of the fact. With him the *fact* and the *appearance* may or may not have been one and the same; but we are not bound by his individual conception, nor is the essential truth of Scripture committed to it. To express the same phenomena, Luther admirably uses the German *Feste*; but, perhaps, the best of all would be the Latin *expansum*; as the conception of solidity early becomes obsolete in the Hebrew applications, whilst this remains as the universal idea. From the same appearance came afterwards the conception of the concentric spheres, or imagined firmaments carried farther off as crystalline separations between the planetary and empyrean heavens,—“those flaming walls of the world,” as Lucretius most poetically expresses it,

flammantia mœnia mundi,

ever bounding the sense, but throwing themselves open to reason and faith, or the

vivida vis animi

seeking to penetrate into the “ things that do not appear.” These spheres, however, it should be remembered, entered for some time even into scientific language, and however much they may have been banished from the text-book, they still maintain their place as firmly as ever in all our pictorial imaginings of the celestial system.

Here, too, it should be observed, is a modified use of the word heaven, somewhat changed from the universality of its application in the first verse. In the language of science, we might say it is the atmospherical, in distinction from the astronomical heavens. In the Mosaic conception, however, the one is not yet parted from the other. There is the same sensible limit to both. It is the *visible* firmament, or what we call the sky, — whether this be the same with the Greek *σκιά*, (or shade,) so called from its blue color, or the Saxon *sciêne*, German schön, Danish skiön, the *shining*, the *clear*, the *beautiful*.

But why might not all this have been said in the modern and more correct language? Why might it not have been said—some one may reply—as the author has said it in his description or explanation of the fact set forth. Certainly Deity could have made it as plain as the commentator has done, or attempted to do. We answer—He has done so—He has made it far more clear, infinitely more clear. Had he employed our language, it might have answered for the nineteenth century, although very imperfectly even for that; but it would have been unintelligible to the ages that have

preceded us, just as it will be quaint, and obsolete, and childish, perhaps, in ages to come. Divine Wisdom has adopted a better method. It has employed words and images which never can become obsolete. It has marked the fact, and the *order* of the fact in the sequences of creation, by phenomena which no one can mistake, and which speak a language the same for all seeing eyes, for all *conceiving* minds, for all states of philosophy, and all ages of the world.

But whilst the explanatory and scientific style the author has adopted is not so clear, it no more escapes the charge of being phenomenal. We talk of *atmospheres*, and clouds, and refractions, and reflections of light that produce the appearance which Moses called the expanse or *firmament*. But what is an *atmosphere*? It is ἀτμοῦ σφαῖρα, a sphere or ball of vapor. That is our word, but it is no less phenomenal than *firmamentum*, עֲרֵב, στερέωμα, *expansum*, *Feste*. There is, in reality, no such sphere or ball of vapor. It is not limited by a defined surface like the ocean. It is only an appearance. It is our mode of picturing or conceiving it. It may seem a little more scientific than the most ancient view, but all that we can say is, that our conception imperfectly represents a fact or a power, or a system of facts and powers in nature, and so did the Hebrew. The same will hold true of our more common terms. The word *cloud* we would call literal language, with nothing metaphorical about it; but go to the old Saxon, and we find a root related to the Latin cludo claudio, Greek κλειδ, to shut, enclose, as well as to the derivative *cloth* — all presenting the same image, and the old image, of something that *shuts in*, *holds*, or contains, like a bag.

We recognize it in Job, xxvi, 8, — *He bindeth the waters in his cloud, and the cloud is not rent under them.* So also, Proverbs, xxx, 4, — *Who bindeth up the waters as in a garment.* We talk, too, of the reflection, or *bending back*, and of the refraction, or *breaking*, of light. So, too, of the various intermediate phenomena, through which is produced the great phenomenon of the the visible vaulted sky. We construct our scientific representative terms out of these more interior appearances which science has given to the conception, instead of deriving them at once from that which is outward and ultimate to them all. Such is our scientific language; and yet further science is ever showing, not only its phenomenal character, but its utter deficiency when we would make its conceptions identical with, instead of representative of, the fact or facts. Truly, had God waited until science and philosophy had perfected their lexicon, His sublime revelation of the order of the world's genesis, would never have been given to mankind. For it is, in truth, this *order*, this *succession* of facts, and not the philosophy of it, which is the thing made known, and which science never would have discovered.

## CHAPTER XI.

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### WORK OF THE THIRD DAY.

#### THE DIVISION OF LAND AND WATER.

DOES THE SPIRIT IN CREATION ALWAYS ACCOMPANY THE WORD?—THE EXPRESSION "UNDER THE WHOLE HEAVEN."—THE DRAWING OFF OF THE WATERS.—INTERPRETATION OF THE HEBREW VERB.—THE APPEARING OF THE LAND.—THE CREATIVE ENERGY IN THE EARTH.—THE UPHEAVING OF THE LAND.—BIRTH OF THE MOUNTAINS,—PSALM XC AND CIV.—DRYING OF THE LAND.—THREE HYPOTHESES.—THE SUPERNATURAL THROUGHOUT.—THE NATURAL ALL IN THE SPACE OF TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.—THE NATURAL WITH AN INDEFINITE PERIOD.—WAS THERE A SUSPENSION OF THE PROPERTIES OF EARTH AND FLUIDS?

THE third period is one on which we are not required to dwell at any great length. The terms employed to set forth the division of the land and water, present points of much philological interest, and demand a careful examination. But the work of the second part of this creative day, or the first growth of vegetable life, would be considered to most advantage in connection with the fifth period, along with the production of the animal natures.

As the light first comes out of chaos, then the atmosphere, or the separation of the fluid from the fluid, that is, the aeriform from the liquid, so have we next the separation between the liquid and the solid. It is, however, not so much the essential as the phenomenal division that is here set forth. "And *God said*, Let the waters which are under the heaven be gathered together to one place, and let the dry land appear." It is a proper occasion here to say something farther on the language with which

each division commences. We have already presented the view which some of the earliest Fathers maintained respecting this Word of the Lord, as the divine energy going forth, the *λόγος προφορικὸς*, manifesting itself in the separation and distinction of what before was blended and indefinite. Hence, it is appropriately called a *naming*, a distinguishing. To the same view we trace certain expressions in other parts of the Bible. As in Psalm cxlviii, 15,—“*He sent forth his word—His word runneth very swiftly.*” Psalm xxxvi, 6,—“*By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all their hosts by the spirit of his mouth.*” Here, as in some other passages, we have the *word* and the *spirit* conjoined. And this suggests the thought, whether the language of the second verse, “*the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters,*” should not be repeated, or regarded as repeated, in the second and third, as well as in the first going forth of the creative Word. And so throughout; the commencement of each division, or of the morning of each division, is marked by the same supernatural *Presence*, as well as the same supernatural Word; as though we had read, “*And again the Ruah Elohim hovered, or brooded, over the earth, and God said, Let the waters be gathered and the dry land appear.*” The new energy comes; the power of obedience is simultaneous with the command; the Word and the Spirit go together; the work begins; nature is then entrusted with it, and the history of the change is afterwards briefly expressed by the common formula *בַּיְהוָה*—“*And it was so.*” As though God commended nature for her diligence and obedience. The language that follows strongly suggests the idea of a superintending Lord



looking forth and approving of the work of a faithful servant—“*And God saw that it was good.*”

“And God said, Let the waters under the whole heaven be gathered together, and let the dry land appear.” The expression, “*under the whole heaven,*” is evidently used to denote universality, *in universo terrarum orbe*; as in Job, xxxvii, 3, xli, 3. Compare, especially, Job, xxviii, 24,—“He looketh under the whole heaven.” “Let the waters be gathered together,”—  
 קָוִי תַּמִּי—LXX, συναχθήτω τὸ ὕδωρ—Vulgate, *Congregentur aquae*. The most common sense of קָוִי is to *hope, to wait patiently*; but this comes from the rarer yet still distinct primary significance, to *draw out, stretch out*; precisely as the Greek verb, ἰσχυροῦμαι, where the primary and secondary senses are related in a similiar manner. “*Let the waters be drawn off.*” This would give us the true image, and would correspond well to the sense of the noun מִקְוֵה as in Exodus, vii, 19, Leviticus, xi, 36, where it is used of a reservoir of waters, in distinction from a spring or a river, and Isaiah, xxii, 11, where the same word with a slight vowel change, is applied to a public reservoir made for the use of a city, and to which the waters from the neighboring streams are drawn. The force of the passage would also be well given by the old Syraic sense of the root, to *abide, to remain permanently*—“Let the waters abide in one place,” instead of being diffused, as heretofore, and wandering like a shoreless ocean under the whole heaven. In either view, the use of these old primary senses is proof of the antiquity of the language of the account.

“*And let the dry land APPEAR.*” In other parts of the Bible, where there is a reference to the creation and

the Mosaic account is evidently kept in view, the mountains and valleys, the hills and plains, form prominent parts of the picture; as in Proverbs, viii, 25, where their settlement or foundation is placed among the earliest antiquities of the earth,—“Before the mountains were sunk, (or settled on their bases) before the hills was I born.” So, also, Psalms, xc, 2,—“Before the mountains were BORN” (or generated.) Compare Psalms, civ, 5, and similar expressions, Job, xxxviii, 6. But here there is no reference to such formation, unless it is contained in this brief language. We have the strongest reasons for believing that it is so contained, and that the peculiarity of expression in this case gave rise to the fuller mention in the passages quoted. It is implied in the verb תִּרְאֶה, which, although of the Niphal, or passive form, has a reflex active meaning, like the Greek φαίνεσθαι, or ἀναφαίνεσθαι, to *appear*, to *show itself*, to *come into sight*. As in that beautiful passage in Homer, where the island Phæacia is described by this word as looming, or rising up to the vision of the shipwrecked Ulysses.

Ὀκτωκαιδεκάτῃ ἘΦΑΝΗ ὄρεα σκίοεντα.

Odyss. v. 279, x. 29.

“On the eighteenth day there rose in sight the shadowy mountains.” How strongly, too, does it call to mind the language of Ovid, *Metam. Lib. I, 343*.

Jam mare litus habet: plenos capit alveus amnes;

Flumina subsidunt: colles exire VIDENTUR;

*Surgit humus: crescent loca decrescentibus undis.*

“Now the sea has a shore; the floods subside; the hills appear out of the waters (or seem to mount out of the waters); the ground rises; the (earthy) spaces grow as the waters decrease.” According to this understanding of the words, the real action would be expressed by the

latter verb, and the latter clause of the verse. What at first seems a poetical representation, is found, when closely looked at, to be in accordance with the most probable view of the real facts in the case. The real energizing power was in the earth, upheaving in some places, and settling down in others. The *drawing off* the waters was the effect. In this way they are *gathered together* into one immense place, instead of being diffused over all the earth, or under the whole heaven. And now the dry land *appears*. Compare Job, xxxviii, 8, 11, where the picture of confining, and setting bounds to, the waters corresponds in a striking manner to this conception.

This is the way in which “the mountains *were born*,”\* to use the very language that Moses himself employs in the old 90th Psalm. They were generated in the deep abyss; they were “curiously fashioned in the lower parts of the earth;” like the foetal embryo they grew beneath the dark waters, ever swelling and expanding until the period was consummated, and the natal morn had come, when they burst from the enclosing womb and rose to their birth among the things “that are seen” or “do appear.” The conception remains in the later Hebrew writings,—“I went down to the *bottoms of the mountains*; earth with its bars was round about me,” Jonah, ii, 7. The Vulgate has for the rare Hebrew word in this place, “*extrema montium*,” the Syriac renders it the “depths of the mountains.” These towering eminences are imaged as having their roots deep down

\* The exegesis of the Hebrew word here employed is fully given in another place.

in the sea, and as thus yet resting in the lap of their ancient mother.

The strongest confirmation of our exegetical view is to be derived from Psalms, civ, 6,—“With the deep thou didst cover it as with a garment; over the mountains (that is where the mountains now are seen) stood the waters; at thy rebuke they fled, at the voice of thy thunder they started.” And then follows this remarkable language—we make the English an exact imitation of the Hebrew and the Hebrew construction—“Go up the mountains, go down the valleys unto the place thou hast established for them.” These verses have been referred to the flood, but against such a supposition there are very strong reasons. In the first place, the older commentators, and some of the best among the modern, have regarded them as descriptive of creation, and especially of the work of this third day. Another argument is that the preceding verses refer to the creation beyond all doubt; and in the third place, if we would understand it of the flood, there is a difficulty arising out of the very construction of the Hebrew words. Our translation makes *waters* the subject of the verbs, but to do so without any preposition following would present a construction unexampled in the Hebrew language; whereas the other sense flows directly and in the easiest manner from the words as they stand. יַעֲלֵי הַרִיּוֹת, “*The mountains go up, the valleys go down.*” With this correspond the ancient Versions. The Syriac stands precisely like the Hebrew; the Vulgate renders it—*Ascendant montes, descendunt campi.* Luther gives it to us most graphically—*Die Berge gehen hoch hervor, und die Breiten setzen sich herunter.*

The whole aspect of these passages, taken in connection with the brief account in Genesis, gives strongly the impression that the place for the *gathering* and abiding of the waters was made by this upheaving action in the earth, the very action, if we say nothing now of duration, to which the geologist ascribes the growth and form of islands and continents.

“And let the *dry land* appear.” The word  $\text{הַיַּבֵּשׁ}$ , it is true, is often used of land, as solid land in distinction from water, like the Greek  $\xi\eta\rho\acute{o}\nu$ ; but the whole connection of the thought goes to bring out the primary sense and make it a prominent feature in the pictured process. This primary sense of the word always implies an actual drying from a previous state of humidity—*exaruit—aridus factus est*. Thus, in Job, xiv, 2,—“The waters fail, the rivers are *dried* up.” It brings vividly before the mind the image of wet, marshy land, such as would be left on the first emerging from the ocean, and which goes through a process of drying and hardening, the duration of which, whether longer or shorter, is to be inferred from the nature of the action, unless there is something in the account which positively forbids the application of such a rule of judging. But here is a series of events whose continuance, if not their beginning, has every appearance of a *natural* process, that is, a process in which one event is linked with and comes out of another. The language would seem intended to convey that idea. Although presented in the briefest terms, the great facts follow each other in just that regular order which would be the result of present established laws. The first energy, indeed, is supernatural; but as soon as the before quiescent earth begins to hear the

new creative voice, it feels the upheaving force; the mountains swell; the plains sink down; the waters are displaced. They flow into the subsiding region; the land, with all its divisions of hill and valley, begins to appear; evaporation commences; a drying and solidifying process goes on, and is carried through its necessary stages and degrees until fully completed, and the new state of the earth is fully brought out. The result is, that what was before a wild waste of shoreless waters, is now a world of continents, seas and islands, with its dry land prepared for the abode of life, and clothed with a luxuriant vegetation. The *great* steps are supplied by the account and its necessary implications; something which has the appearance of causation is revealed; can we resist the feeling that the numerous intermediate lesser links which are required to complete the idea of such causation are not also implied?

To give the idea more clearly, we may indulge in three suppositions, one of which alone can be true.

1st. The whole work took place instantaneously in some moment of the day allotted to it. Or,

2d. It was a process—a process of cause and effect, and therefore entitled to be called *natural*, (although having a supernatural beginning,) yet such that with all its antecedents and consequents, its great changes, and its lesser intermediate links, it all took place within the time of twenty-four hours, or of a portion of twenty-four hours; since a part, and it may have been, much the largest part of this creative day was occupied with the production of vegetable existences from the earth after it had become dry. Or,

3dly. It was a natural process supernaturally commenced, and yet, as a natural process, occupying such duration as all the sequences of cause and effect therein implied would naturally suggest to the mind, and which would be demanded for their harmonious succession and co-ordination on the supposition that the leading properties of matter, of earth, and fluids, their gravities, their resistances, their laws of cohesion, of pressure, of motion, were about the same with, or in any way analogous to what they are now,—that is, as they appear to the common mind judging from common experience, and according to the impression that would be naturally made by what seems, on the face of it, to be the common language of causation.

In respect to the first of these suppositions, it may be said that there is in it no a priori incredibleness. God might have made things so, had he seen fit, and, for all that we can know, such instantaneous action without media would have been worthy of him. To our conception, it might have seemed more sublime than any other mode. In a moment, from a boundless waste of waters, there is a transition such as might have come from going through all these changes and all these apparent grades of causation. In a moment, the shoreless abyss might have been converted into an earth with its continents and islands, all dry without having gone through any drying process, all finished, all with their permanent form, all clothed instantaneously with an immensely varied and luxuriant vegetation. This might have been; but the objection comes from the very face of the account. The language forbids this first supposition. There is evidently conveyed by it the thought of a process of some

kind, longer or shorter. There is that which looks like a causation, a train of sequences,—or, in other words, an energizing of *natural* powers producing natural results.

Was this all crowded into the space of a few hours? If so, the very supposition destroys itself. We have every reason to believe that the earth and water, as they existed at the beginning of the third day, possessed, in the main, the natural properties which they now possess, the same or a similar gravity, the same density, the same resistance, the same laws of fluidity, of pressure, of repulsion; and that the same or similar effects would have followed from their action upon each other, according as that action was slower or more rapid, that is, took place in a longer or shorter time. And so, also, in respect to the processes of evaporation and aridification; they must have had some analogy at least to the same processes as they now take place. This is only saying, that if there is a nature, there must be a harmony, a consistency in it. Otherwise, it is only a phantom, an appearance of a nature, when it is all really supernatural, an appearance of causal sequences when there is really no dependence, no coherence. They are all separate links; and the appearance of connection is only deceptive. Such an apparent process of moving waters could not have taken place throughout all the wide earth and ocean, within the time of a few hours, without utterly deranging all such causal dependence, even if we suppose the laws of nature to have been much more rapid in their action than they have been since; of which, however, there is no intimation in the account. It would, in fact, be wholly supernatural, in the sequences, as well as in the



beginning ; as truly supernatural as in the first supposition, but yet with this fallacious appearance of causation.

The objection does not lie at all against the first hypothesis ; for there God is supposed to have suspended the previous laws of nature, or previous properties he had given to things. They are held back from coming in collision with each other while He performs His supernatural work, and makes the wonderful transition without going through any of the stages which would seem to lie between. The world is now in this state, and then *immediately* in that, although the distance which separates the two is one which it would take nature, or any system of connected sequences, ages to travel. In such a case, God is supposed to hold nature in abeyance. If he does not destroy her, he casts her, for a season, into a deep sleep, as He did to Adam when He brought out of him a new and supernatural human creation. Thus, too, in this mighty work of the third day, if such an immense motion and commotion of the waters took place over all the earth in a few hours, their gravity, their resistance, their very inertia, must all have been changed, or held in suspense, to prevent that utter ruin which must otherwise have been the inevitable result.

But on the other supposition there could have been, in reality, no causation, no real sequences, nor linked series of effects coming out of antecedent causes, in any part of the seeming process. The rising land, the retiring waters, the appearing, the drying, the vegetable growth, had no real connection with each other ; there was no real *nature φύσις*, *growth*, *genesis*, or physical transition from one thing to another, or from one state to another. And yet the language does give us some such impres-

sion of causality and causal sequence, whether we call it nature, or give it any other name.

The third hypothesis remains ; and in respect to this the question arises — Shall we measure the sequence of events by a rapidity of duration which would surely falsify them, if judged by those common ideas of causation the language would most naturally suggest, or shall we interpret the time in some conceived and conceivable analogy with the processes that would be in our minds if we did not suppose ourselves limited by the supposed measure of twenty-four hours ? In other words, shall we estimate the day by the work, or judge of the work solely by a preconceived reckoning of the day ?

We content ourselves here with making the statement and presenting the difficulty which attends every hypothesis but the third. The first may be called the wholly supernatural ; the third may be described as the natural originated by the supernatural, and then following established laws in their established order. The second would be neither the one nor the other. It would have the appearance of a causation which is not a causation, — of a miraculous agency which is at the same time described in language adapted to a natural process. It is thus as much at war with the true and only idea of a miracle, as it is with the laws of our thinking about nature. But a more careful proof of this will find a better place in a subsequent chapter. The same question comes up in the description of the work of the fifth day, where the language of causation is still more prominent, and the idea of natural production out of the earth is still more strongly forced upon the mind.

## CHAPTER XII.

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### WORK OF THE FOURTH DAY.

#### THE HEAVENLY BODIES.

CREATION OF THE SUN AND MOON.—THEIR APPEARANCE.—THEIR APPOINTMENT IN THE HEAVENS.—OBJECTIONS.—THEORIES.—NOT INCREDIBLE THAT THEIR ADJUSTMENT SHOULD HAVE BEEN LATER THAN THAT OF THE EARTH.—BULK NO MEASURE OF RANK.—OUR UTTER IGNORANCE OF WHAT IS BECOMING IN THE DIVINE WORK.—WHAT IS THE MAKING OF A THING?—THE WORK OF THE FOURTH DAY AN ARRANGEMENT.—NARROWNESS OF SCIENCE.—INTERPRETATION OF THE HEBREW WORDS.

THE earth at this stage is preparing to become the supporter of vegetable organizations, and the abode of animal and rational life. But for the perfect development of these, if not for their origination, there is needed the orderly arrangement of seasons, and the regularly adjusted light and heat of some great luminary,—in other words, an apparatus by which there might be brought out those shorter subordinate cycles of activity and repose, of production and reproduction, through which nature would be aided in consummating the work of succeeding periods. For vegetable life alone they might not be necessary, especially in its earlier stages, but for the animal and the human they became absolutely indispensable. Even for the rational they furnish an aid which in our present state of being becomes of the highest importance. Their vicissitudes are required for the regularity of the physical growth; their harmonious divisions

of times are to exert a deeply modifying influence upon the laws of thinking and upon the mental development. The creation of such seasons was to be the work of the fourth period immediately after, if not simultaneous with the first birth of vegetation, and before the production of the reptiles, the earthly animals, and man.

It should be remembered that light and heat had been in being long before, and had been acting with a continuous energy; but seasons, that is regulated suspensions and varieties of light and heat, such as are required for the higher cycles of organic life, had as yet no existence. Previous to this the earth may have been often blazing with a phosphorescent splendor, or shrouded in stygian darkness; but those were not regular vicissitudes. They were not the long ante-solar cycles running through the appointed round of their own cyclical law; nor were they the measured days of the celestial luminaries. The period has now arrived in which the latter must be lit up, and make their APPEARANCE in the firmament. Whoever will carefully study the passage must perceive this at least, that not the absolute creation of light or luminous worlds, but the regulation of seasons, the year, the month, the now regularly returning day and night, were the designed results to be brought about; and it is a clear view of this design that must control all our interpretations of the language in which the corresponding phenomena are set forth. The elements\* or bodies for this time-measuring, season-producing, apparatus, had existed long before, just as the earth had been in being

\* Thus, in 2 Peter, iii, 10, the word στοιχεῖα is used to denote the *elements* of nature, or the component parts of the physical world.

for ages, but this was the period for bringing that apparatus into manifest exercise, and these verses set forth the great *fact* through the same kind of language that is employed in the other cases. The unknown, unmeasured series of space-creations which may have taken immense times for their full accomplishment are denoted by the outward and ultimate results. The *dynamical* is represented by the *optical*, the things *unseen* by the “*things that do appear*.”

And God said—“Let there be lights (מִאֲרוֹת, φωστῆρες, *fiant luminaria*,) in the firmament, to divide between the day and the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years. The word here is not the same as that for the element light, although from the same root. It more properly signifies *luminaries*, or light-giving bodies. The Septuagint presents this view of the word in the Greek φωστῆρες, and Luther in his *lichter*. “And let them be for *lights* in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth; and it was so. And God made the two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. And God so *arranged* them in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth, and to divide between the light and the darkness.”

In this passage there is, perhaps, the greatest difficulty in the whole Mosaic account. The writer would not seek to disguise it from himself or his readers. It is a difficulty, however, which must grow out of every attempt to conjecture by what process the phenomenal result is brought about. As far as regards the appearance itself, or the statement by which it is set forth, the interpretation is of the simplest and easiest kind. But have we

really anything to do with such process, or with any substances or causes that might have existed, or might not have existed, anterior to the phenomenal arrangement? Did the matter of the sun have a being before the fourth period? Was it covered with some obstructing veil which prevented its shining upon the earth? Had it yet become luminous? Were there obstacles in the earth, or the earth's atmosphere to the reception of its light? Had our planet been yet connected with the solar system, or commenced its revolution upon its axis? We cannot answer any of these questions, either in the affirmative or the negative. We cannot affirm the irrationality, or deny the rationality of any theory grounded upon any one of them. Science is dumb, and revelation says nothing about it; while reason admits any hypothesis that does not contradict our ideas of the divine perfections. Creation in six solar days, or six millennial ages, —creation by direct exercise of the divine energy, or by development through nature, or by a blending of both,—creation instantaneous or gradual, continuous or per saltum,—are all, in themselves, alike rational, alike consistent with piety, or with any view we may entertain of the manner in which God may see fit to manifest His glory to an intelligent universe.

It may be thought, however, with some reason, that the greatest difficulties lie in the way of that hypothesis which would make the very origination of the very matter of the heavenly bodies cotemporaneous with their manifestation on the fourth day. There are, also, puzzling obscurities that hang round the opposite view, or the one which is here maintained. Still none of these do directly touch our main argument. We may be una-

ble to clear them up; and yet the leading ideas set forth in the introductory chapter are unaffected and unmodified by any such difficulties. The long periods, the mixture of the supernatural and the natural in every creative work, the phenomenal nature of the language,—these are the great outlines we have attempted to trace in the Mosaic account, and these retain the same force, and the same position, whatever view we may take of the process through which were brought about the appearances of the fourth day.

The more carefully, however, the account is examined, the more will scientific as well as hermeneutical difficulties vanish away, and the more clearly will be seen that on which we have so much insisted,—the *fact* set forth in distinction from the *conception* through which the mind receives it.

The main perplexity arises from blending a false view of certain words with some of the conceptions of our modern astronomy. Thus we are led to think of the sudden creation of the sun, or of the very matter of the sun, on the fourth day. This body we have been taught to regard as immensely larger than the earth, and hence the apparent absurdity. Now even if this were the right interpretation, that the sun was wholly created on the fourth day, still, even in that case, the objection would be far from unanswerable. We might be rationally called to reconsider such an opinion of relative importance, as being a narrow prejudice instead of the enlarged view which some might fancy it. Is it not, indeed, a narrow view to regard greater and less simply in respect to bulk? The sun may in this vastly exceed

the earth, and yet be a very inferior body, of vastly less importance in the scale of God's works; just as the huge central bulb in certain machineries may be far inferior in dignity to the small extremities it is intended to support or connect, and on this account, may without any absurdity be regarded as of inferior and *posterior* workmanship. A priori, then, there is nothing irrational or incredible in the idea that the orderly constitution, and even creation, of the sun should have been later than that of the earth. What is the sun but a huge mass— at least we know nothing to the contrary— designed to hold the planets in their places, and to be their depository of light and heat? It is huge, just because bulk and capacity are required for these purposes, but, it may be, on no other ground of superiority, either in respect to relative rank or intrinsic excellence.

We may take a similar view of the relative importance of our earth, as compared with the other bodies of the solar system. It is apparently among the smallest, but we have no right to conclude from this its inferiority, not even its physical inferiority. Such a conclusion would be as unscientific as it is unphilosophical. The earth may be one of the smallest, because the more condensed, and, therefore, the more fitted for a world of habitation. The huge Jupiter, with his 250,000 miles of equatorial circumference, may be but a wild waste of waters, such as the earth was on the first day of creation, when it may have been far more expanded than it has ever been since. Saturn, astronomers tell us, is lighter than cork, and may be not much more dense than a bladder of gas; or even if composed of any firmer substance, it may be yet



without a moss, or an animalcule, or the lowest rudiments of a shell fish, within the bounds of his leviathan bulk.\*

Should any one hesitate to adopt such a view on the ground of its being opposed to analogy, or that it would be an impeachment of the divine wisdom and goodness to suppose such immense spaces, constituting so large a part of our solar system, to be as yet *tohu* and *bohu* in respect to living beings or even the lowest forms of animation, we may well ask, how or why the mystery is any greater than that which we are compelled to admit in respect to our earth. Our apologist for the Deity must be careful how he undertakes the defence of Him "who hath no counsellor"—"who doeth according to his will," not only "in the earth," but also "among the armies of heaven above." He must be careful how he lauds as divine wisdom what may be but his own short-sighted ignorance and folly. Why are there such immense wastes on our own planet? Why the frozen regions of the north? Why the thousand-leagued desert of Sahara? Why are four-fifths of our earth a barren expanse of waters? Why are the organized regions of the visible universe an infinitesimal portion in comparison with what may yet be regarded as empty space? Why all this waste? Why are there not ten thousand more worlds than there are? One class of questions is as rational as the other. Uninhabited planets, uninhabited systems, unorganized nebulae, or congeries of stars, occupying spaces which our highest arithmetic fails to

\* There are some things here which correspond, both in thought and expression, with a late remarkable work on "The Plurality of Worlds," but they were written sometime before that work appeared.

estimate, are no mere impeachments of divine wisdom than the everlasting snows of Siberia, or the ever barren sands of Africa.

Our conviction of the divine goodness and wisdom must be an a priori idea, confirmed, it may be, by what we see in nature, but often held in opposition to the very appearances she presents. Not that simple being is therefore wise and good merely because it *is*, for that would be only a logical logomachy; but the ground of our thinking is the converse of the reason of God's acting. He hath made all things as they are, *because* thus to make them was wise and good; we believe that they are wise and good, because He made them thus. God has not left us to that poor evidence of sense whose decision, when unsupported by this higher authority, must ever vary according to the small number of facts, out of innumerable facts unknown, on which it founds its inductive verdict. The visible universe may be filled with inhabited suns and planets; or there may be few that have arrived, or are even destined to arrive, at that dignity. Our earth may be a pioneer among them, not only as respects the other planets of the solar system, but also the vast host of stellar bodies. We know nothing about it, and have the most scanty data for any reasoning about it. Without the least fear of the imputation of arrogance, we hesitate not to say, that the confident views on this subject, presented in such books as "Nichol's Architecture of the Heavens," or by the great mass of our popular scientific lecturers, are alike baseless in their premises and their conclusions. They are simply addressed to the popular wonder, and, in this respect, are as unscientific as they are unphilosophical.

As regards the question we are now discussing, all such speculations are utterly worthless. Millions, and billions, and trillions, add nothing, whatever, to the argument. All known analogy is against these sweeping inductions. A planet, a sun, a system, may immensely exceed the earth in space, and even in mass, while yet our underrated birth place may be as much above them in moral, intellectual, and even physical dignity, as the island of Manhattan surpasses in value the frozen wastes of the whole Antarctic continent. If, then, the Scriptures actually and unmistakably taught such a supposed creation of the sun on the fourth day, we should be far from rejecting it on account of any such pretended scientific difficulty as this of some modern astronomers.

But, in fact, they teach us no such thing. As we have seen, the Mosaic account does not set forth the absolute creation out of nothing, even of the earth. The word *בָּרָא*, (*he created*,) refers to the whole subsequent work. The writer seems to commence with the earth in its rudimentary state; its creation is a long process, consisting in the dividing, arranging, disposing of existing material, and attended, from time to time, by a superadded energy coming from a supernatural source. If such be the case in respect to the earth, can we reasonably suppose that there would be here so sudden a departure from the fundamental idea, and that the "making" when predicated of the celestial bodies must all at once be taken as an instantaneous, or a least, a sudden, work? We may fairly judge, then, from the analogy of the account itself, that the sun, and other bodies related to our earth, had been going through a similar process. They, too, presented a φύσις, a nature,

a growing up from chaos ; they, too, had been the subjects of successive divisions in their gradual organization, brought about, perhaps, by a like succession of supernatural interventions.

But what do we mean by a *making* in the most common and direct use of language. It is not the origination of the material, nor the preservation of the material identity, but the construction, or preparation for a certain use, in reference to which the thing *made* not only has its name, but actually *is* what it is. A mass of dark matter, or of unformed matter, floating in the universe of space, is not *a* sun, or *the* sun, although it is that from which a sun may be *made* or constituted. And so we may say of every production. The making of it is the making it to *be* that which it *is*, that which it *does*, and hence, that which it is called or named ; for a thing can only be named from that which it *does*, or is made to *be*. It is not made, in any true sense, until by a modification of its material, or some outward arrangement of its material, it is put in relation to that use, or made to manifest that particular action, or those peculiar phenomena, from which the name is derived. In this sense, the *making* and the *naming* of it are the same thing. Nor is this a forced metaphysical notion out of the common range of thought or speech. We would appeal to every reader's consciousness, if this is not the common idea of the word *making*. It is the other notion, — namely, of the origination of material out of nothing, that is metaphysical and out of the ordinary use of language. It has come from a supposed logical necessity of a certain theory, and been forcibly connected with the Mosaic account, because it

was thought to be demanded by the reason, and the consequent exigencies of the narrative.

Adopt either theory, however, and we come to very much the same conclusion. Is the Mosaic creation a construction, an arrangement, a manifestation, a harmonizing, or bringing into relation, of pre-existent materials, then, as far as interpretation is concerned, we have nothing to do with the origination, or, in that sense, the *making* of the sun and moon. If, on the other hand, there is truly meant to be set forth an actual creation out of nothing, as is maintained in the opposing hypothesis, then, according to the same hypothesis, and the literal interpretation which it demands, the whole creation of material took place in or at the period called the beginning mentioned in the first verse, and before the commencement of the days. And so we come round to the same point in the argument; for in this view, too, all that follows is but the arrangement, separation, connection, and, in a word, *disposition*, of masses already originated, and which, from all we know from revelation, or otherwise, may have been ages in existence.

If, then, the after creation of the *earth* was an arrangement, or *disposition*, so, also, must have been the work of the fourth day, or the after arrangement of the long previously originated sun and moon. We may indulge in an endless variety of suppositions as to the manner in which it was brought about. It may have been in any of the ways we have already mentioned. What might, perhaps, most stumble our man of science, would be the theory which assumes that at this period there was established, or begun to be established, the present existing relation between the sun and earth; or that at this time

the revolution of the earth on its axis was adjusted, if not originated. But science cannot say anything for or against such a view. It might be objected, too, that even if we suppose the matter and mass of the sun to have been created long before, still analogy forbids the supposition that so important a development and arrangement did not take place until this comparatively late fourth period. But who shall determine for us the laws or grounds of such analogy? It all belongs to that class of questions to which, in the very nature of things and ideas, no answer can be returned except the one furnished by Scripture—“His ways are not as our ways, *His thoughts* are not as our thoughts.” Why was not the earth and the universe brought into being ages before it was? Why has it not long since been finished, or, at least, carried much farther towards its highest glory and consummation? Surely, the moral world is of as much importance as the physical; but why, then, was there so long a delay before the “Sun of Righteousness” arose upon our earth “with healing under his wings?” Why must it be the *fourth* millenium before Christ could be born? and why is yet so large a part of the world a moral chaos on whose face the darkness still rests, and to which no vivifying Word has yet gone forth? There is a far deeper mystery here than is suggested by any real or supposed arrangements of the solar system.

But aside from any considerations of this kind, and even with the physical world alone in view, how unscientific, how very much like the spirit the man of science himself condemns, but which is so excusable in the untaught, to carry back our present conceptions of modern days and years, with the other phenomena the

sun now presents, and because they have been unvaried for a few brief generations of the human race, to fancy that it must have been the same at that immensely remote period cotemporary with the first beginning of vegetable life upon the earth! Would not all fair analogy suggest the thought, that the astronomical relations of our earth were as unsettled, as remote from what they were afterwards to be, as the then terrestrial arrangements? How can science say whether there was then any revolution of the earth upon its axis, or not, or how fast or slow it may have been,—whether the revolving force grew out of the slow operation of natural causes, in which case it must have had a regular acceleration from a minimum, that is, from an infinitesimal to a maximum degree, or whether it came from a sudden impact of the Divine hand after the earth had acquired sufficient condensation to endure the centrifugal tendency of the new and preternatural impulse,—whether there was any inclination of the ecliptic circle, and what was its amount,—whether each fluid and vapory body of the solar system may not, as a consequence of its then rarified state, have been self-luminous,—or whether the rudimentary sun, during its gradual formation, may not have been either opaque in itself, or covered with a dense vail such as now seems to form its second or interior coating, until all things were adjusted for its being lighted up as the central luminary of the system. “Knowest thou when God *disposed* them, or when he caused the light from his cloud to shine?”—Job, xxxvii, 15. The passage may refer to the lightning, but it is capable of a very remarkable accommodation to the great event which we are now considering. We say again,—science knows nothing

about these ancient celestial matters. We do not know how, or when, or why, they built the pyramids, or by what mechanism they piled up the huge rocks in Stonehenge. We may be safe in deciding that the lower stones were placed before the upper, but this is more than we know when we get off the earth, and into remote times, and amid a very different state of things, where the very questions of upper and lower, and prior and posterior, and ends and means, must baffle the pursuit of our keenest calculus.

The geologist spurns with contempt all reasoning from the present fixed appearance of nature against undoubted facts which go to show great and sudden convulsions in former ages. If this be true of the earth, why not of the heavens also? If it be true of the earth in itself, why not also of its relation to the sun? Since the beginning of human observation, as recorded in history, sacred and profane, all things in the celestial spaces have continued as they were, or nearly so. The diurnal and annual revolutions have presented no perceptible or measurable variation. Whatever parallaxes there may have been among the fixed stars as a consequence of a change of our position in the great visible universe, they can hardly be determined by the nicest instruments. The same old constellations roll over our heads, in the same order, in the same relative positions, and with about the same degrees of apparent brightness. But this does not oppose the idea of former changes in the sun and stars, as well as in our immediate planet. To measure these remote effects by our now *regulated* times would be equally absurd in both cases. Besides, is not the telescope now revealing something of the same anomalous



kind as going on in parts of the universe which may be supposed to be as distant from us in space as the primæval aspects of our own system are remote from us in time? In some quarters of the heavens, there would seem to be yet transpiring changes analagous, to say the least, to those that took place in our own earth's far-off infancy. How else shall we account for the strange appearances presented by certain nebulous systems, whether we regard them as fluid, or congeries of stars? Within the compass of a few months or days, sometimes in the hours of an evening, sometimes under the very eye of the observer, there are taking place—at least, this is the appearance—variations in the internal condition of immense masses, and their apparent relations to each other, such as in our fixed system, and under our present unchanged laws of nature, would take millions and millions of years to accomplish.

Adopting certain scientific theories as the ground of the fancy, we might imagine astronomers who lived at that remote day, in some other remote system of higher progress, turning their glasses towards the obscure nebulous cluster of bodies that may then have formed our condensing solar system, and speculating about their development. But “we are of yesterday,” and know nothing about it. We are just as ignorant, at the best, as is the astronomer, even yet, and with all the help of Lord Rosse's telescope, in respect to the question whether the light of a nebula is from self-luminous phosphorescent parts, or whether it all comes by radiation and reflection from a central body.

To resume, then, our main argument—we may conclude that at this fourth period, partly cotemporary with vegetation, and before the earliest dawn of animal life,

the sun assumed toward our earth the state and form of a luminous body, and the adjustment of the shorter periodic seasons commenced. This is the great *fact* revealed, and revealed, as usual, through the conceptions that Moses, or any other unscientific man, would connect with it. All that we can say is, that at this period the solar system was lit up, the phosphorescent light which the earth may have possessed went out as the planet became more dense, the veil was taken from the central luminary, in order that now there might be not only light and warmth, which existed before, but such *regulated* diversities of them as would be required for the later vegetable, as well as for the animal and human life.

“And God said, Let there be luminaries (*fiant luminaria.*”) “And He made two great lights.” The Hebrew verb here is *עָשָׂה*. We attach little or no importance to any argument grounded upon any metaphysical distinction between it and *בָּרָא*. The latter, as we have seen, has no such metaphysical sense, and the other is one of the most general terms in the Hebrew language. Like the Latin *ago*, or *facio*, or our own *do*, or *make*, its precise idea ever depends on the context. The whole apparent difficulty is cleared up by looking at the syntax — “He *made* two great lights, the greater light *to rule* the day.” The specifying portion thus coming in makes the careless reader lose sight of the connection, and regard the verb *made* as an absolute term denoting present fabrication. But of the true syntax the English scholar can judge as well as the most learned Hebraist. The sense of *made* is limited by the infinitive that follows — “He *made them to rule* the day,” etc. “Let

there be *lights, lighters, luminaries,*” said God, as in the remoter period He said “Let there be light,” and in obedience to the same voice the lights *appeared* in the firmament,—the sun in its phenomenal glory, ἥλιος ἐν ὀπτασίᾳ, εἶδος οὐρανοῦ ἐν ὀράματι δόξης, as it is most graphically presented by the Son of Sirach—“The moon, the beauty of Heaven, the glory among the stars, an ornament giving light in the high places of the Lord,”—κάλλος οὐρανοῦ, δόξα ἀστρων, κόσμος\* φωτίζων ἐν ὑψίστοις κυρίου.—Ecclesiasticus, xliii, 1–9. “And he made one to rule the day, and the other the night; and he set (or displayed) them in the firmament so as to give light upon the earth.”

Thus would we infer that *disposition*, or ordination, and not creation, is the true idea. It appears on the face of the account itself, and is, moreover, abundantly confirmed by other passages of Scripture. Thus, Job, xxxviii, 33,—“Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven; canst thou set their dominion in the earth?” Jeremiah, xxxi, 35,—“Thus saith the Lord who *appointed* (יָרָא) the sun for light by day, and the moon by night; if these my *ordinances* (חֻמֵּי, οἱ νόμοι οὗτοι, *leges istae*) should depart, then should Israel cease to be a people before me.” So, also, Psalms, civ, 18, which should be rendered,—“*He appointed* the moon for seasons, the sun knoweth his setting.” To the same effect the passage to which we have already referred from Ecclesiasticus, or The Wisdom of Sirach, which, although apocryphal, presents most clearly and beautifully the ancient idea. “At

\* Or “a world giving light.” The whole passage is one of exceeding beauty, and remarkable for so distinctly presenting what we have called the optical or phenomenal aspect of creation.

the command of the Holy One they stand in their order, and never faint in their watches,"—Ecclesiasticus, xliii, 18. We present these passages from the Hebrew poets, not as proof of the fact, or the truth of the fact, but as evidence of the manner in which they conceived it. Their design is to magnify the Lord, and had an absolute creation been in their mind, it is hard to explain why it should not have been strongly set forth, instead of this other idea of ordination, or phenomenal arrangement, which is so strikingly presented in these and similar allusions to the Mosaic account of the heavenly bodies.

## CHAPTER XIII.

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### SOLAR DAY AND SOLAR DIVISIONS OF TIME. TIME-MEASUREMENTS AND TIME-IDEAS.

FIRST MENTION OF THE SOLAR DAY.—COULD THE PREVIOUS DAYS HAVE BEEN OF THE SAME KIND.—QUESTION RESUMED.—THE WORD DAY.—ANALYSIS OF THE ESSENTIAL IDEA.—ITS FOUR CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS.—WORDS MORNING AND EVENING COMPARED WITH SPRING AND FALL.—REASONS FOR DWELLING ON THIS.—THE TRUE CONCEPTIVE STAND-POINT.—MUST CARRY OURSELVES BACK INTO THE OLD HEBREW FEELING.—THE PERIODICAL IDEA.—DIFFERENT KINDS OF ASTRONOMICAL DAYS.—IDEA OF DURATION.—THE DAY THE UNIT.—HOURS DERIVE THEIR MEASURE FROM IT.—GOD'S ESTIMATE OF TIME.—“A THOUSAND YEARS AS ONE DAY.”—“HIS THOUGHTS ARE NOT AS OUR THOUGHTS.”

“*And let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years.*” These certainly were natural days in the common usage of the term,—our common days of twenty-four hours. Could those that were mentioned before as marking the creative periods, have been of the same kind and the same duration? This brings up the old question, in respect to which we would again beg our readers' indulgence. We have already discussed it at some length, but there are additional thoughts which could come in nowhere else so well as here, where we have the first mention of solar days. It is a question of naturalness of interpretation. Those who hold the indefinite periods are charged with taking the word out of its natural and easy sense. The use of the term here, it is said, limits its sense in other parts of the account. Had there been intended a different sense, or

a different force, some intimation would have been given to that effect. We think it has been shown that such an intimation is given — that the strange morning and evening of the first day, the necessary indefiniteness of the first night, the necessary absence of those phenomena which mark the two parts of our solar period, and the whole strange aspect of the account in all its stages, suggest the thought of the extraordinary, the anomalous, the unmeasured, and the immeasurable, that is, as far as any subsequently ordained dimensions of time should be applied to them. Such thoughts must have been in the mind of the medium who wrote the wondrous narrative; such thoughts he must have known would naturally present themselves to the mind of the reader, should he feel himself compelled to carry the conception of solar days of twenty-four hours into his interpretation of the first four periods. The intimation was enough, and was deemed enough; and thus viewed, the express mention here of sun-divided days, instead of being an argument for their identity, is strong proof that the previous periods, whose evenings and mornings must have been made in so very different a manner, must also, on that very account, have been of a widely different character.

What do we mean by a natural day,—or as it might better be called, a common solar day? The importance of the question demands a close analysis of the idea. There is no other way of divesting ourselves of conceptions, which, however natural they may seem to us when entertained from one stand point, may appear most unnatural when considered from another.

In the idea then of a day, in its most general sense, there are four elementary constituent thoughts.

1st. Its cyclical or periodical nature!

2d. This periodicity made by two antithetical states characterized by opposite qualities, of which the one kind is the negation of the other.

3d. Its duration in time.

4th. The mode in which this duration is marked, and its periodicity determined.

Of these the first and second are not only *essential*, but constant, catholic, and immutable. The third and fourth are variable and specific. Without its periodicity and its antithetical division, there could not be a day at all. The idea would be wholly lost. No mere division of continuous time, measured merely by a certain arbitrary extent, could answer to the notion, or be entitled to the name. On the other hand, the third and fourth may be varied to almost any degree, and yet the radical idea be preserved. The duration may be twenty-four hours, or twenty-four thousand years. The mode of antithetical division may be by risings and settings of a revolving or apparently revolving body called the sun; or it may be by any cyclical law in nature producing two opposite times of rest and action, of progress and repose, of cold and warmth, of growth and decay; or it may be by any other mode in which there are produced two periods of direct contrast, making up by their alternation the completed cycle.

Applied then to a common solar day these constituents of the idea (the two constant and the two mutable) would stand thus.

1st. Its cyclical or periodical nature.

2d. Its two antithetical seasons.

3d. A specific duration of twenty-four hours.

4th. This duration and antithetical division determined by the phenomenal rising and setting of the sun.

The first and second, or the essentially immutable, are as before. The third and fourth present a varied and peculiar character belonging specifically to what we call a solar day. But such, says the objector, are the days of creation. The third characteristic is not only essential, but as essentially immutable, in the idea as the first. Your analysis, he might say, is of no value, because it was made to suit a particular hypothesis which assumes fixedness and universality in the first two, and mutability in the third and fourth. Twenty-four hours, or that precise extent in time, is as essential to the idea to which we give the name day as its periodical nature; being thus essential and indissolubly associated with such name, there cannot be a day without it. Very well. We answer, then,—Why is not the fourth, or the present manner of making and marking that duration by sun-risings and sun-settings, equally essential, equally invariable, equally inseparable? Which inheres most fixedly in the idea of a day—a common natural day, we mean—its duration of 24 hours, or its divided periods of sunrise and sunset? Do we not truly feel that it is more difficult to sever from the idea the thought of the latter than of the former characteristic? We can more easily think of a day longer than 24 hours, than of one which has no such sun-made antithetical division. Now, we are compelled by the very language of the account to make this severance in the case of the Mosaic days,—at least the first four of them. They were certainly without a rising and setting of the sun. If in the absence of this they could be called days, then—a for-



tiori — could the name be naturally and truly applied to those that varied from the common day in respect to the less essential element of a twenty-four hours' duration. They were not, then, *common* days; they were not common mornings and evenings; and if so, what difficulty, or what violation of language, or of ideas, or of the fair laws of interpretation, in taking the other step and affirming that they were uncommon or extraordinary, in their duration? Much more easy, too, would it be to do this, if we take as our stand-point those early times when the pictorial conceptions, etymologically contained in the words יום, בֹּקֶר, עֶרֶב, and which are so easily associated with the general cyclical idea, may be supposed to have been yet fresh in the thoughts. Since they have faded away or become obsolete, the conception assumes more of an abstract or mere quantitative character, and we become rigid in the notion that a certain duration is the most essential, and thus the most natural, element in the idea. When the Hebrew terms for morning and evening were yet as freshly metaphorical as our words *spring* and *fall*, and contained very much the same pictorial conceptions of reviviscence and repose, it was much more easy to keep up the association of ideas on which the true interpretation so much depends.

And this will be the more easily seen when we call to mind how much our exegetical ideas are affected by the associations of language; so that what appears forced, or unnatural in one aspect, appears most easy and natural in another. Nothing is more certain than that יום, *yom*, or *day*, occurs most frequently in this unmeasured sense of age or period. Now had it been, in all such cases, invariably rendered *age*, the reader of our English

version would have become familiar with the phrase, and would thus have been prepared for the notion it might be regarded as conveying in the first of Genesis. If, for example, in all such cases as that of Micah, iv, 6, v, 9, Isaiah, xii, 1, ii, 1, Micah, iv, 1, vii, 12, we had been accustomed to read: "In that *age*, saith the Lord, I will gather in the outcasts, and the Lord himself shall reign over them in Mount Sion"—"In that *age* shall ye say I will praise the Lord, for he has become our salvation,"—"In the latter *ages* shall the mountain of the Lord's house be established on the tops of the mountains and all nations shall flow unto it,"—"In that *age* there shall come unto thee from Assyria, and from Egypt, and thy dominion shall be from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain;"—or, to take examples still more closely resembling the case we have in view, had we always read in Micah, v, 1, "whose outgoings are from the *ages* of eternity," or Psalms, lxxxix, 29, "His throne shall be like the *ages* of heaven,"—had we been accustomed to this, we say, and also well knew that in all these and similar passages the word there rendered, and most properly rendered, *ages*, was the same word which, in Genesis and elsewhere, is translated *days*, we might have been, in respect to this idea, in the same condition with the early Hebrew mind when it was familiar with both applications of the term, and received each as alike natural, alike literal, acknowledging no more of metaphor in the one usage than in the other. We might have even felt that the wider, the freer, was the more primitive, the more real sense, in fact, the original idea in respect to which all the lesser applications are but cyclical correspondences on a reduced scale.

Such, we may say, was truly the condition of the old Hebrew writer, and the old Hebrew reader. The whole aspect of the passage, as it presents itself in the original, might have come up to his mind just as it would do to us, had we been accustomed to the translation *first age*, *second age*, etc., instead of the one which, to our present association, presents the narrower sense.

The objection to this from the mention of the evening and the morning, we have already considered, and shown that such mention strengthens instead of weakening the main position. It may be remarked, however, that the above train of thought is equally applicable to these terms. There are many passages in which they, too, are employed in this extended sense. It is the case, moreover, in other tongues besides the Hebrew, that the evening is used for the period of decline, of inactivity, of repose, the morning for the sudden introduction of something new, of something higher and better. As we have traced these words, this old pictorial sense, which is entirely independent of any ideas of duration, is even more marked in their etymologies (as shown in the Hebrew, the Syriac and the Samaritan) than in the primitive words for *day* and *night*. Again, they are distinctly applied to other portions of astronomical time of greater extent than the solar diurnal period. There is the morning of the year. The spring is so called as its season of awakening, of reviving, just as winter is its evening or night of torpor and repose. So, also, there is the morning of life, the morning of a nation's history, the morning of the world, and of the human race. But this, it may be said, is poetical. We deny it, in the sense in which the epithet is meant to be employed. These words, thus

used, are pictorial as all language is, more or less, but no more poetical than the common English words Spring and Fall, in their most common use as applied to different seasons of the dying and reviving year.\* It is all a matter of use. Had we been as much accustomed to a similar application of morning and evening, there would have been the same easy harmony in the association required, and we would have been the more easily prepared to feel the right application of the same expressive terms to the longer antithetical periods of rest and awakening that constitute the Mosaic *yom*, or age. The Hebrews *were* accustomed to it, and we may feel ourselves, therefore, on strong ground, when it is maintained that in the reading of Genesis, the larger cyclical ideas would come as naturally to them as the smaller do to us.

We dwell on this here, as we have done elsewhere, because every thing depends upon getting the true conceptive stand-point. It is not enough to show, as can easily be done, that the Hebrew *may* have this indefinite sense, or that the word day possesses it in other parts of the Bible, or even that the language furnished no other term of time that would so well represent the long period. Something more is wanted to the argument, if we would exhibit the true ground of such usage; and therefore in consideration of its most important bearing upon the whole ground of our discussion, we ask the reader's

\* The imagery is beautifully presented in the etymology of the Hebrew אֲמִגְדָּל, *the almond* (*amygdalus*.) It is so called, says Gesenius, quia omnium arborum prima *e somno hyberno evigilat* et expergiscitur,—because of all trees it first awakes from the sleep of winter. Hence it is presented to the Prophet in vision (Jeremiah, i, 2,) as a symbol of wakefulness and faith.

indulgent patience with this minute analysis of ideas and primary conceptions. The object is to show that such a view of the words *day*, *morning* and *evening*, is not only a possible one, or one out of many possible conjectures, but that in the peculiar circumstances and aspects of this remarkable description, it is the most natural and easy, as well as the most satisfactory that can be taken.

But let us define more carefully another term which we have been taking in its most general and indefinite sense. By *period*, then, we mean a wheel or round of events completing itself, and thus measuring itself off, and separating itself by such a completed course from other periods. Our solar day is such a *currus* or course of events completing itself on a reduced scale. It is with us the first and simplest cycle in nature, and, therefore, is it that in most languages, growing as they do out of the common natural logic of the human soul, this term is so easily applied to any such round or naturally connected series of events, be it longer or smaller; and that, too, not only in the natural world, but also in the moral and political. It is not a mere simile, or a merely illustrative metaphor, but an expanded application of one and the same radical idea to a different scale. This periodicity, we have said, is the first and immutable element. You cannot take it away without destroying the idea. Duration, on the other hand, is the incidental, or rather the mutable, aspect. It may vary to any extent. There are different days in the different planets of our system, yet all real days. Our own sidereal day is shorter than the solar day. Even our solar day may not be the same now as in the earliest times, or as it may be before the completion of the present *αἰών* of our earth's existence.

The day of Joshua we know was preternaturally prolonged. It is not the exact length even of our common day, (the Bible says nothing about that,) but its regular periodical recurrence which is secured by God's covenant after the flood.

Now, does it not seem unnatural and forced to make the incidental or changing element (incidental at least in form and extent) the essential one, and insist upon a certain precisely measured duration (especially when the Bible is utterly silent about it) as the controlling feature in the use of the word; as though it could not be a day without twenty-four hours, although it could very easily and naturally be a day without any rising or setting of the sun, and so, of course, without anything like our common morning and evening?

Besides, what is this duration? Day is an absolute idea, because it contains its law and measure in itself. But divisions otherwise made are merely relative. Hours, minutes, and seconds, have no meaning except as certain divisions or fractions of an absolute or self-determining period called a day. They do not make the day, but the day them; they do not measure the day, but the day them. They derive their ratio wholly from it. The day is the unit, and an hour is the twenty-fourth part of the diurnal cycle, be it longer or shorter in respect to absolute duration. To estimate, then, the horal divisions by themselves as absolute times, (which must always be done when we make them the arbitrary measures of antesolar periods,) or to regard the day as equivalent to them, or any sum of them, would be like the attempt to picture to the mind's eye yards, feet, and inches, in empty

space.\* We might as well give the name to any arbitrary lengths of twenty-four hours into which a clock might divide the long day of the Arctic regions. There are still such twenty-four hour periods there, as made by the stars, but our solar diurnal cycle ceased at the Arctic circle. With perfect propriety, therefore, do we speak of the day at the pole as being a twelvemonth in its whole duration,—six months in one state and six months in the opposite, thus making its night and morning. There the day has become identical with the year. And yet it is still a day. We feel that the language is literal and true, and not merely a metaphorical accommodation.

Again, before the birth of the rational soul, in other words, the space-and-time-measuring soul, what *estimate*—we do not say what absolute extent—but what estimate of time at all? .What estimate of it in any of its relations to our earth, as they could be perceived and calculated by any observing intellect? It may, perhaps, be said that it was measured in the mind of God. True; but let us remember again the remarkable qualification that must suggest itself whenever that idea is brought in. “His ways are not as our ways; His thoughts are not as our thoughts; as the heavens are high above the

\* The same thought is well set forth by Augustine *Contra Manichæos*, Lib. II, Ch. 14,—“Quia si currant tempora, et nullis distinguantur articulis, qui articuli per siderum cursus notantur, possent quidem tempora currere atque præterire, sed intelligi et discerni non possent. Sicut horæ quando nubilus dies est, transeunt quidem, et sua spatia peragunt, sed distingui a nobis et notari non possunt.” The reader who will take the pains to examine the passage, will see that Augustine is treating directly of our present subject.

earth, so high are His ways above our ways, and His thoughts above our thoughts." For with Him "a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. They are as yesterday\* when it is passed and as a watch in the night"—

Ten thousand ages in thy sight  
Are like an evening gone;  
Short as the watch that ends the night  
Before the rising dawn.

This, it should be remembered, is from that sublime and most ancient production, the 90th Psalm, entitled "The prayer of Moses, the man of God." Is there any thing unnatural, far-fetched, or forced, in the supposition that the same superhuman conception may have been in his mind when he was writing of the great days of creation,—the days of God's working, the days of "the right hand of the Most High?" What would more naturally suggest the thought? What adds the strongest confirmation to this view of the passage is its direct connection with the mention of the work of creation as made in the second verse preceding: "Before the mountains were *born*, or the earth had been brought forth, or the round world, from everlasting unto everlasting,  $\text{עַד-עוֹלָם}$ , from *olam* to *olam*, (from æon to æon, from age to age,) Thou art God." The whole force of the contrast between

\* In remarkable analogy with the Hebrew notions of duration, is this word  $\text{אֶתְמולֹת}$ , commonly rendered *yesterday*. It is also used to denote past time generally,—sometimes great antiquity, or that which is long past. Thus, Isaiah, xxx, 33, "For Tophet is ordained *of old*." Compare, also, Micah, ii, 8. It is the same word that is here used. It may seem a paradoxical conception, and yet the ideas of transitoriness and of long duration would appear to be both combined in the expression.



the human transitoriness and the divine eternity depends upon these different conceptions of time, and the application of the distinction to the greater works of Deity. If they have force when suggested by God's dealings in our own world, age, or *olam*, then surely would there be a still grander harmony of idea, when they come to the mind from the contemplation of the ages during which the earth was brought from chaos to its full and consummate existence as the abode of rational humanity.

But how long were these creative days? The question must remain unanswered. Perhaps it could not be answered in any language, or any computations that the human mind could receive. They were *dies ineffabiles*. They were incommensurable by any estimates we could apply. The whole question, too, is comparative. In one aspect they may have been short, in another immensely long. The Bible has not told us anything about it. The geologist thinks he has discovered evidence that they were of vast duration. He talks very flippantly, and very ignorantly, of millions and billions of years. He measures the operations of God and nature then, by the movements of the latter as they come under his present observation. On the other hand, the rigid advocate of the twenty-four hour theory presses him with a great many very puzzling questions as to the rationale of such a method, which our confident appellant to reason and science finds it very difficult to answer. Why so many ages apparently wasted before the living organizations? Why so many thousand years of *fungi* and sea weed? Why so many ages of shell fish with their unmeaning varieties,—unmeaning, he would say, as long as there were no human eyes to admire, and no men of

science to classify them into genera and species? Why so many unhistorical centuries of zoophytes, and worms, and monstrous reptiles,—all before man appeared? What wisdom in all this; what possible design worthy of an all-wise and omnipotent Being; what order, what fitness, what beauty? It is absurdity, it is confusion, says the literalist, it is worse than chaos, it is worse than atheism, it is, in truth, a godless nature that would work in this manner, and not the eternal Wisdom. Such a priori objections may be pressed with great force and skill. The geologist, from his mere scientific position, cannot answer a word. It would certainly look like a very strange proceeding. But then, if he chooses to take other ground, and assume the offensive, he may turn right round, and press home upon our literalist just as many questions which he cannot answer. Why a world of waters, then a world with an atmosphere and clouds, then a world of vegetation, then a world of reptile life, then a world inhabited by quadrupeds, each precisely twenty-four hours before the other? And what must have been the apparatus for making these days of twenty-four hours that had their date before the outshining of the celestial luminaries? Did the light go out, and the darkness come back, each time, from its submersion in the abyss? Why is there no explanation of the difficulty which the writer must have seen to exist, if the twenty-four hour duration had been meant? Why is there not the least allusion to it in any other part of the Bible in which the creation is spoken of, and its marvels made the theme of praise and admiration? What possible conjectures can be offered on this head, which will not seem more strange, forced, and capricious, than any posi-

tions assumed by the most extravagant geologist? There is no end to such questions. Why was this? and why was that? and how was this? and how was that? They may be asked to affinity, and the maintainer of the twenty-four hour hypothesis cannot answer one of them without resorting to that divine *arbitrium* under which the scientific speculatist may take shelter as well as himself.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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AS THE HEAVENS ARE HIGH ABOVE THE EARTH, SO ARE  
GOD'S WAYS ABOVE OUR WAYS, AND HIS THOUGHTS  
ABOVE OUR THOUGHTS.

IDEAS OF SUCCESSION AND DURATION.—DO THEY EXIST IN THE DIVINE MIND?—  
WHY WAS NOT CREATION INSTANTANEOUS?—THE DIVINE WAYS UNSEARCHABLE.  
THE CHILD INTERROGATING NEWTON.—AUGUSTINE'S VIEW OF THE CREATIVE  
DAYS.—DIES INEFFABILES.—PROBABLE CONCEPTION OF MOSES.—OBJECTION  
CONSIDERED.—LANGUAGE OF PROPHECY.—MYSTERIOUSNESS OF THE STYLE.

WE have been considering the mutual objections of the geologist, and the literalist, as he styles himself. There is, however, one great question that might be asked of both—Why was not the whole work instantaneous? This would certainly seem to accord well with some of our supposed a priori notions of the Divine dignity and power. We say supposed notions, for when we carefully examine the grounds of our thinking, it is seen that the dignity of the Divine working is no more connected with the putting forth of immense power in a moment of time, than with concentrating the same power on an atom of space. In other words, it is no more compromised by the conception of duration than by that of extent. The other view is a mere prejudice arising from the limitation and imperfection of the human mind, which makes us connect the idea of suddenness with any great exercise of power; as though slowness, whether of continuity, or of a movement per gradus, were a waste of energy.

It comes from viewing things, as we are compelled to view them, solely on the human and finite side. To God, all his works must appear a totality, with none of those *discrete* degrees of cause and effect by which we are forced to measure, and even to conceive of, duration. In other words, the remotest natural *effect* (or *out-working*) is *in* the supernatural cause that originates the whole inseparable chain. God sees it in the cause. It is there to us *potentially*; but as no cause can be inert in any part, (this being contrary to the essential idea,) the whole *out-working* may be said to be present to Him actually as well as potentially. We, on the other hand, must bring it into moments, or, to speak with more etymological correctness, into *instants*. We must connect them in our minds by links of causation, each of which we are compelled to think of as parted on either side from its antecedent and its consequent by some interval, or we cannot think of them at all. But the very idea of God forbids our rightly applying this to Him who is as *immediately* in all time, as He is without separation *present* in all space. We err, therefore, on the side of deficiency, and not of excess, when we say that the longest chain of supernaturally originated causation, though to us it may be equivalent to the whole cycle of the mythical *magnus annus*, or great year of our own mundane system, may be, to the Divine mind, what the circuit of the electric chain is to the human sense, and the human conception. The whole is one Divine *act*; the whole vibration of nature, or of any particular cycle in nature, is to Him instantaneous, or, we might more correctly say, *without instants*. The beginning, middle, and end, are all in one flash. This is the nearest *con-*

*ceptive* representation we could make of the ineffable idea. But, on the other hand, even our electric flash which seems to us so instantaneous, may be no nearer to the absolute instant,—we mean as far as any absolute measure is concerned,—than the longest æon of creation; just as the smallest sensible space, if we measure it by its conceivable intervals, may be no nearer to absolute nothingness than the distances of the planets. A chronological microscope, or some instrument which would magnify time in a way analogous to the effect produced by the microscope on space,—that is, would widen the angle of observation which we may conceive of as separating the intervals of apparently rapid causation,—such an instrument, we say, whether its power be regarded as affecting the outer or the inner sense, might reveal in the telegraphic flash as many links, each, too, having its own separate moment, as the keenest science can count in the stratified phenomena of the long creative chain.\* We have spoken of it as a mere conception of mathematical divisibility; but it may be thought as an actual fact, realized by some actually existing mind or sense. Even in the electric current which seems to us so instantaneous, there may be an immensely long series of events, or causative links, of which the soul endued with microscopic, or rather micro-chronical, powers of sense, would be compelled to think, if it thought at all, as presenting the same slowness, gradualness, or proceeding by successive degrees—for they are all one name for the

\* Such a supposition of a time magnifier we know cannot be realized, because time belongs to the inner sense, and is measured by the flow of thought. But it will do for an illustration.

same thing—which the geologist finds in the past history of our world. Augustine may have meant something like this when he speaks of the mysterious first day as containing all the rest. The whole creation may be said to have been in the principium, in some such manner (if we may compare very great things with very small) as the whole of the day or the month is in the coiled spring of the clock.

Is it said that all this is mere metaphysical subtlety, endangering belief in the most sober convictions, let the charge be made as well against the Psalmist and the Apostle. In what we have said about duration as related to the Divine mind, we have only dwelt upon their own sublime idea. We may perhaps have been “darkening counsel” in endeavoring to explain or add to it, but the whole truth is expressed when we simply repeat their own most vivid language, “A thousand years are with the Lord as one day, and one day as a thousand years.” But we must view things from our own stand-point; and here the question not only becomes natural, but may be rationally pressed against any mere theory which grounds itself upon certain times as essential to the work, whether those times be short or long, or by whatever standard we may attempt to measure them. Why was not the whole work instantaneous? What need had God of periods, whether of twenty-four hours or of millions of years? It is all strange, very strange, on either hypothesis. All our speculations run up, at last, into the unaccountable. The naturalist as well as the theologian has at last to take shelter in mystery. Every one acquainted with Mercator’s map of the world, knows how increasingly monstrous become its projections the farther

we get away from the familiar plane of the equator. So must it be of every attempt to project the finite upon the infinite, or which is the converse of the same thought, to confine the infinite to an identity with any forms and conceptions of the finite. One thing, however, the Bible does teach us beyond all question, and that is reverence. There are difficulties everywhere. Science is revealing them much faster than she solves them, and one of her greatest wonders is that her revelations, in this respect, do not make her votaries more humble. "In thy light do we see light," says the Psalmist, when speaking of the Divine illumination, but of human science the seeming paradox holds strictly true,—through her light unaided by any higher beams, we see only an ever-increasing darkness.

But the Scriptures, too, have their difficulties. Nature and redemption are both full of strange things. "Lo these are but *parts* of his ways," says Job, xxvi, 14. The expression is remarkable, and its intimate connection with our subject warrants us in briefly dwelling upon it. "Lo these are but the *ends* of his ways." Such is the true rendering of the Hebrew *קצות*. Umbreit very graphically translates it, *Grenzlinien seines Weges nur*. "*Only the ultimate linear boundaries of his ways.*" So Gesenius,—*Extremæ lineæ viarum ejus*. "The things that do appear" are but the outside extremities, the mere ends of the threads, we may say, that stick out from the deep-laid warp and woof of nature. The wondrous thought is carried on in the succeeding clause,—“How little a *whisper*\* (*שָׁשׁוּר*) is heard of Him.” And then the

\* Umbreit—Was für ein leiser Laut des Worts von dem wir hören? Gesenius—*Quid est (quam tenuis est) susur-*



sublime contrast,—“ But the *thunder* of his power who shall understand.” If we can but just receive the revelation of his glory as it is whispered to us in *phenomena*, who shall hear that awful voice, should it attempt to make known to us the essential mystery of the universe ?

We may “interrogate nature,” we may interrogate revelation ; but when we have His answer, through one or both, we have no right to interrogate farther the Great Workman himself. Imagine the lisping child touching the hand of Newton, and enquiring of him the meaning of the abstruse diagrams and operations on which he is so intently engaged. Imagine, too, our young philosopher of final causes exulting in the discovery that all these calculations had reference to his greatest amount of “pleasing sensations,” or that the telescope and the orrery were but toys “benevolently designed” for the promotion of the “higher happiness” of himself and his prattling associates. It is no caricature ; it falls short instead of exaggerating ; it is but the faintest image of that sublime Scriptural image which rebukes this whole spirit, whether in the naturalist or the commentator. “Who shall touch\* His hand, and say unto Him,—*what*

*rus verbi quod nos de eo audimus?* Symmachus—τι δὲ ψιθύρισμα τῶν λόγων αὐτοῦ. It is the same word we have, Job, iv, 12, where there is a like *whispering* revelation in respect to the spiritual world and God’s moral government. “A word was secretly brought to me (or stole upon me) and mine ear received a *whisper*-thereof.”

\* Daniel, iv, 32.—In this striking passage the rendering “to stay,” (to stay his hand,) although it gives the thought fails in presenting the imagery which is in the Chaldaic אִתְּךָ. It means “to touch,” to *strike gently—to tap—to lay the hand upon one*. Gesenius, after a number of quotations from

*workest Thou?"* It certainly is very strange that *fungi* should exist ten thousand years before man? What purpose could they have served during all those immense ages? But the difficulty is not in the duration; it is not at all lessened by any shortening of the period. It is just as strange, too, that the system of the world should require that *fungi* should exist exactly three times twenty-four hours before man. It is very strange that *fungi*, at least some *fungi*, should exist at all. But all such queries are met again by the impressive rebuke of the Scripture,—"Who hath directed the spirit of the Lord, (the creative *Ruah Elohim*,) or being his counsellor hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed him, and taught Him the path of right, and showed to Him the way of understanding? *Who shall touch His hand and say unto Him, What doest Thou?"*

We would fortify this part of our somewhat prolonged argument on the duration of the periods, by referring to the opinion of St. Augustine. It was a view of the difficulties we have mentioned, as attending the supposition of solar periods of twenty-four hours, that led this wisest of the Fathers to conclude that they were not *veri dies*, *real days*, or the same as our natural days, but periods, *moræ*, *delays* or intervals, as he calls them on account of their extraordinary character. It is of no importance here, what he may have thought of their duration, whether longer or shorter. Augustine was too philosophical and logical to make a precise duration of twenty-four hours, or what was equivalent to twenty-four hours,

the Arabic and Talmudic writers, thus explains the passage—*Metaphora a pueris desumpta est, qui, digitis percussis, a re vetitâ deterrentur.*

the essential of a day, when he admitted that they were extraordinary in respect to that which is still more closely connected with the common idea,—we mean their measurement by the rising and setting of the sun. He may have thought them short, if he knew of no proof or reason for their being long; but when one is thus fairly off the ground of the solar day hypothesis, there is nothing in the way of his regarding them as wholly indefinite, or as having any such duration, as a consistent explanation of the account may require.

We might easily fill a chapter with quotations from this Father, and very pertinent quotations, too, on the great question,—What was the real nature of these days? It is sufficient for our argument that he regarded them as altogether anomalous. Some of his explanations are metaphysical, involving inquiries in respect to the ideas of time and duration. In one place he seems to think that they were not *current* days, that is, that they did not pass at all, (*non præterirunt*), or had not strictly duration, because they were before the birth of time and belonged to the æonian state. But this is unintelligible. He refers to other opinions which are partly allegorical and partly mystical. Their correctness, however, or their agreement with modern science, is a matter of little importance in our argument. They are cited only to show the impression the Mosaic language made on one of the profoundest minds of antiquity, long before any discoveries in science could have turned the thought from what some would regard as the literal and unmistakeable interpretation. In his treatise, *De Genesi ad Literam*, Lib. I, Ch. 3, he thus asks,—*Quid ergo volunt tres dies transacti sine luminaribus? An ista dierum et noctium*

enumeratio ad distinctionem valet inter illam naturam quae non facta est et eas quae factae sunt, ut mane nominarentur propter *speciem*, vespera vero propter *privationem*? The distinction of morning and evening he thus supposes to be a distinction between a nature not yet made and its subsequent manifestation. Its coming out of the previous *privation* is the morning. It is its receiving *form* and *species*, (quo facta *speciosa* atque *formosa* sunt,) as the words signify in their philosophical sense. The previous chaotic, or comparatively chaotic, condition of each period, is its evening; and this, he says, still rests upon them so far as they are regarded in themselves, or in their possibility of returning, should God permit it, to their original night. To the same effect in his work, *Contra Manichæos*, Lib. I, Ch. 14,—Restat ergo ut intelligamus in mora temporis has distinctiones sic appellatas, vesperam propter transactionem consummati operis, et mane propter inchoationem futuri operis. Habent enim consuetudinem divinae Scripturae de rebus humanis ad divinas res verba transferre. The reason, it will be perceived, is somewhat similar to the one that has been advanced, that, in some respects, each imperfect state was a night to the more perfect that succeeded. There is much more than this in the contrast of the terms, but even such an explanation is more natural, more in harmony with the language than the exegetical fancies to which the self-styled literalist has to resort in order to make a morning and evening without a rising and setting sun. In the work, *De Genesi ad Literam*, Lib. II, Ch. 14, he returns to the same topic,—Quis ergo animo penetret quo modo illi dies transierint, antequam inciperent tempora quae quarto die dicuntur incip-

ere? And then he gives the same distinction as in the first quoted passage. It is called day, *circa speciem*, or the coming out into form and species; it is called night, *circa privationem*. But this evening and morning, he proceeds to say, are to be regarded not so much in respect to duration (*temporis praeteritionem*) as in respect to their marking the boundaries of a periodical nature,—per quemdam terminum quo intelligitur quousque sit naturae proprius modus, et unde sit naturae alterius exordium. The times made by the heavenly bodies are altogether different. These, he maintains, are not what he calls *spatia morarum*, or successions in nature, or between natures, but *vicissitudines affectionum coeli*, mere changes in the conditions and positions of the heavenly bodies, with which we are familiar. Sed certe, horae et dies et anni, quos usitate novimus, non fierent nisi motibus siderum. In another passage, (*De Genesi ad Literam*, iv, 26,) where he had been treating of the Sabbath, there is language still more clear and still more remarkable,—Ac sic per omnes illos dies unus est dies, non istorum dierum consuetudine intelligendus quos videmus *circuitu solis* determinari atque numerari, sed alio quodam modo, a quo et illi tres dies qui ante conditionem istorum luminarium commemorati sunt alieni esse non possunt.—“The day (the seventh) is to be understood, not after the manner of those that we see made by the circuit of the sun, but in another peculiar manner, not unlike that which characterized the first three days of creation.” What follows puts his meaning beyond all doubt, and shows that he was not merely endeavoring to account for the three ante-solar days, or the phenomenal manner of producing them, but that he

regarded the whole seven as belonging to this same strange category. Even after the ordination of the sun and heavenly bodies, the remaining creative days preserved the same transcending character. They were still *dies ineffabiles*, or, to use his own clear language, "days and nights which God himself had divided in distinction from those of which He said let them be divided by the sun:" *Is enim modus non usque ad diem quartum, ut inde jam istos (id est quartum quintum sextum septimum) usitatos esse cogitarem, sed usque ad sextum septimumque perductus est; ut longe aliter accipiendus sit dies et nox inter quae duo divisit Deus, et aliter iste dies et nox inter quae dixit ut dividant luminaria; tunc enim hunc diem condidit quum condidit solem.* "For that mode (the unusual or anomalous mode) is carried through, not merely to the fourth, as though we should thenceforth regard the others as usual solar days, but even to the sixth and seventh; so that, throughout, there is to be a far different understanding of the day and night between which God himself divided, and that other day and night of which He said let the luminaries divide them; for this latter kind He then established when He ordained the sun."

It is sometimes said that the Fathers were poor commentators; pious and good men, they are allowed to be, but deplorably ignorant of the true principles of hermeneutics. It is true, they sometimes see what is not in the Scriptures, and yet it is equally true, that they often see what is really there, but which our modern scholarship in its boastful blindness, wholly overlooks, because it is not really looking to "discover wondrous things out of God's law." But why should the most modern inter-

pretation have so generally failed to notice the distinction which Augustine presents? It is certainly patent on the very face of the language when we come to view it in its true contrasts and its true emphasis. When the eye is once upon it, we see that it could not have been more clearly given in the Hebrew or the English. There it stands in the Scripture, plainer than any records of geology, as distinct as though "graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever." There are the days which *God divided*,—supernaturally divided by his own direct immediate power originating a new thing, or a new work, in nature—and there are the days of which He said, "let the sun divide them," natural days, measured off in the regularly returning course of nature, and marking the interior divisions of that nature instead of being its exterior chronological bound. Here is this wondrous difference patent, we repeat it, on the very face of the account. Can we read of these two kinds of days so strikingly contrasted in their natural and supernatural character, their God-made and sun-made modes of division, and yet believe that they must be exactly alike in all the other features with which we are familiar as belonging to our solar periods? In other words, can we recognize the immense difference in their work and origin, without feeling that the most obvious exegesis is the one that makes a corresponding difference in their duration?

There is a place for other quotations of a similar kind from Augustine, in the argument respecting the Sabbath. Like thoughts abound in some other sections of his argument against the Manichæans. He recurs to the subject, also, in his great work, *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. xi, Ch. 67,

—Qui dies cujus modi sint, aut perdifficile nobis aut etiam impossibile est cogitare, quanto magis dicere. “Which days, of what kind they were, it is very difficult, yea, impossible, for us even to think, how much more to say”! But our quotations are enough to satisfy the reader that ages before geology was thought of, or science had produced any motive for warping the Scriptures, the soundest minds regarded the days in Genesis as denoting strange anomalous periods, *morae*, or intervals in creation, that could never be brought under our common solar measurements. This is all that need be desired as against the twenty-four hour literalist, and the interpretation he would so dogmatically maintain.

There is another question which may be fairly asked here, and to which therefore we would give attention. Can it be supposed that Moses himself really believed in such long periods as the geologist talks of? Was this, or anything like this, his conception of the word day when he employed it? It might be replied that we have nothing to do with Moses' conception. He was a mere medium to write down certain Hebrew words, and if the higher Author has so caused the language to be arranged that it is capable of any expanding sense that science may demand, it is enough. But with this we should not be satisfied. We do not deem the position wholly tenable. According to the theory of language before presented, the *conception* is part, and an important part, too, in the chain of communication. It is represented directly by the words it suggests, and is itself representative of the great fact which stands behind it. We can not, therefore, wholly dispense with the thought of the writer. The higher Author of the Bible, in his commu-



nications to us, made use of the conception of Moses just as truly as he has made use of the Hebrew, or language of Moses, through which that conception was both produced and expressed. It is enough, however, if this conception may embrace the larger idea, and does not exclude it. It may be scientifically very rude, very simple, very incorrect, and yet wide enough, that is sufficiently indefinite or unbounded, to hold all, and more than all, that science can ever bring to fill it. And this furnishes the element of our answer. It is enough for us if we can gather from the face of the account itself, and from all the associations of thought that connect themselves with it, that the writer, be he who he may, was not confined, and did not consider himself confined, to the narrow platform of the twenty-four hour hypothesis. If we can regard him as fairly off it, or if he has said that which makes it impossible that we should view him as standing on it, then have we room enough. We answer, therefore,—It is not supposed that Moses had the conception of our modern geologist; yet still we no less strongly maintain that he had in mind something very different from the solar periods of twenty-four hours such as make our common day. They were to him, not geological ages, any more than they were the ordinary mornings and evenings, but the great days of God's working,—strange, extraordinary, præternatural days. It was not the idea of the modern man of science, yet still it might embrace it. Did the writer extend his mind beyond the limited period of twenty-four hours? Were his mornings and evenings of a different kind from those made by our constant sun-rising and sun-setting? Did his thought go abroad into the indefinite and take in—

to what extent we do not now enquire — the vast in time, as well as in space and power, associating it with the greatness of the Divine action, and measuring it by days analogous to other aspects of the vast conception and such as the thought of God's working would naturally suggest? Then, however limited the science of Moses, or his view of the actual universe, there is room enough in the expansion of such a conception to take in all that science has discovered, or may discover, should her progress even extend so far as to render childish and obsolete all the doctrines and all the language in which she now so proudly boasts.

But why, then, call them days? On this objection, in its general aspect, sufficient has been said. A more specific form of it, however, is drawn from the undoubted mention here of the common solar period,—“And let them be for years and for *days*,” etc. Can it be supposed, says the objector, that the indefinite could have been intended in the preceding use, and that then there should have been so sudden a change. We think we have fairly stated the difficulty, and, in reply to it, we say, that everything depends upon the stand-point we occupy in our interpretation. In one aspect, and as we think, the only consistent aspect of the account, this express mention of the solar days is a decided confirmation of the view that has been taken. The declaration that solar days now begin, seems to establish the position that the days previously mentioned must have been of a different character. The employment of the same word is a matter which resolves itself solely into the usage of language, and will appear natural or forced, according to our familiarity, or want of familiarity, with such usage.

A like juxtaposition of terms might occur in our own tongue, without exciting surprise. Our own language, like most others, uses the word *day* to denote an epoch or cyclical period,\* and an English writer, in setting forth an order or scheme of creation, could say with perfect propriety, and without meaning to be poetical, in that *day* there first commenced the regular division and measurement of years, and *days*, and seasons. Still more consistent would it be in the Hebrew, where *yom* is the most common word for indefinite period, and would most naturally come to the reader's mind whenever that idea had to be expressed.

In such interpretation everything depends upon the association of ideas and feeling, which is forced upon us by the context. Should one thus take the word *day* in some plain historical passage in Kings, or Chronicles, or the "Books of the Matters of the Days," † (דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים) as it is called, he might justly be condemned as extravagant. There is no call there for such an interpretation. We do not mean merely that there is no *exigentia loci*, but that there is, moreover, an utter want of harmony with such an idea. Everything looks the other way. It would be purely arbitrary, if not utterly absurd. But take next a passage from one of the prophetic books, where the writer is looking out into the great uncreated

\* It may have come to us from the Bible, like some other idioms in our language which have the appearance of orientalisms.

† Even here, however, the word is used more properly of years than solar days, and would be better rendered *Annalia* than *Diurnalia*. It is chronological history—or history recorded with reference to measured times, instead of being a list of events simply.

future, where the whole context favors the thought of the vast, the unknown, the indefinite, the unmeasured,—where great events viewed *per se* and without reference to their chronological extent, or strict chronological connections, image themselves upon the canvas of the prophetic eye. In the midst of such associations we feel that the case is quite different, and all the laws of sober hermeneutics require a different treatment of the language. “In *that day* shall the mountain of the Lord’s house be established on the tops of the mountains, and all nations shall flow into it.” The thought of solar days here is altogether out of place; nor, on the other hand, can we explain the use of the term as merely poetical. There is something more than illustrative metaphor, there is a propriety in the language which is independent of all mere rhetorical or tropical adornment. The word has its true and literal, yet vastly expanded and elevated, sense. Take still another case in which the term occurs in connection with specific numbers, and with something, too, of a chronological aspect, but everything around is mysterious, extraordinary, and of a nature to carry us out of the common chronological associations of regular time-measured periods. In such circumstances it does not strike us as at all unnatural to interpret days by years, or even longer cycles of time. Whether our specific view as to mere duration be well founded or not, we feel that the extraordinary interpretation is demanded by the whole air and spirit of the passage. The *weeks* of Daniel and the *days* of the Apocalypse we cannot treat as ordinary weeks and days. The grandeur of the prophecy wholly collapses on such a view. Aside from all questions of chronological correctness, the narrow

estimate is felt to be out of critical and hermeneutical harmony with the accompanying imagery. We are in the midst of the vast, the obscure, the mysterious. We are brought in connection with ideas which, although capable of partial revelation, are in a great degree ineffable. We permit the feeling to influence our interpretations, and we act naturally and consistently in so doing.

Carry this out, then, and would it not apply with equal, if not still greater, force, to the wondrous account of the creation, taking us away back into the unmeasured and immeasurable regions of the past, just as prophecy throws the beams of its lamp upon the dark places of the distant future. Here, too, then, is everything to suggest the same associations of the marvellous and the extraordinary. The word employed is a very common one, but the *manner of expression* is very strange, and designed, we think, to give us an intimation of something very strange in its significance. It is a mode of speech unique upon the face of the Scripture. There is certainly nothing like it in any of the chronological parts of revelation. Time is nowhere else reckoned in this mysterious manner, — There was an evening and there was a morning — one day, — There was an evening and there was a morning — second day, — There was an evening and there was a morning — third day, etc. There was one of these days in which God rested. Was that twenty-four hours long? Has it been finished and the work of creation again resumed by the great Architect? And then there is the day of days, when the whole creative *genesis*, or series of generations (הַיְּמֵי) is summed up in one grand period called “the day in which the Lord made the heavens and the earth.” We do not say that here is,

in all respects, the same style as in the other parts of the Scripture referred to, but we are in the midst of ideas suggestive of a similar expansion of thought and feeling, and which should, therefore, be permitted to have a similar expanding effect on our interpretation of language.

## CHAPTER XV.

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### CREATION OF TIME.

DIVISION OF TIME.—RULE OF THE HEAVENLY BODIES.—REGULATE OUR PHYSICAL LIFE.—AN AID TO OUR RATIONAL EXISTENCE.—HE MADE THE STARS ALSO.—IN WHAT SENSE MADE FOR US.—REGULATORS OF THE SEASONS.—THE POET ARATUS.—WHOLE FOR THE PARTS.—ASTROLOGY.—PHENOMENAL USES.

“AND let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years.” “And he made them to *rule* the day, or for the *rule* of the day, and for the *rule* of the night.” We have already compared with this the passage, Job, xxxviii, 33,—“Knowest thou the ordinances of the heavens? Canst thou set their dominion in the earth?” There is here the same idea of appointing, ordaining, arranging, in distinction from creation. But not to dwell further on this, we would present another thought, which comes to us from the Hebrew  $\text{הִשְׁתַּדֵּד}$ . There is a beautiful suggestion, which may be regarded as fairly connecting itself with the etymological significance of the word. More than any other kindred root in Hebrew, the verb presents the idea of ruling by law, by conformity to a measured and measuring standard. This it gets from the radical primary sense of *comparison*, *assimilation*, agreement with some canon or *rule*; and hence the authority or *dominion* expressed by it is more properly one of *guidance*, regulation, direction, than of arbitrary and undetermined power. We see this in the noun  $\text{הִשְׁתַּדֵּד}$ ,

a *similitude*, a *proverb*, a *parable*, hence applied to any regulated or poetical construction of language.

Now, in this sense, and without pressing too far the etymological image, we may say that it has a striking and beautiful application to the dominion of the heavenly bodies in respect to our earth.

The motions of the sun and moon, or of the earth in relation to them, are not only in themselves the result of law, or conformity to regulative canons, but productive of a corresponding assimilation, or conformity, in our general terrestrial physics. The vegetable and animal worlds become modified by it. The growth of plants, and, perhaps, of all organic substances, is different from what it would have been in the absence of any such arrangement. But more than all this; it doubtless exerts an important influence over the exercises of the rational soul. Every one who reflects must see that the exact knowledge of years, and times, and eras, constitutes one of the great differences between the civilized and savage state, even where such knowledge is regarded as simply affecting those outward utilities that depend upon accurate canons of time. Next to the Bible, the most important book for the human race is doubtless the almanac. Without an accurate measurement of the day and year, there could be no chronology; without chronology there could be no history; without history there could be no national or generic experience; without such experience there could be no progress; and without progress there could be no civilization. All this, perhaps, would be readily admitted in its bearing on our outward state and relations. But do we sufficiently appreciate the direct relation of such measurements to the laws of our



inner life? What would we be, what would our minds become, without known divisions of time? How much is our very thinking, yea, the very law of our thinking, determined by them? They form the connection between the inner and the outer worlds. By means of them, even our material frame is brought into harmony with the phenomenal universe. Our human micro-cosmos is timed and tuned to the great kosmos. The circulation of the blood, the periodical working of the general animal machinery, gets modulated in accordance with its unvarying cycles; and we know that these movements of our bodily microcosm regulate, in a large degree, the flow of the thoughts and emotions. When, through any exciting cause, we think or feel at a faster rate than would be in sympathy with these internal periods, we are reminded of it by a fever, or some other ill effect proceeding from the spiritual to the animal or sentient economy.

Take away, then, all outward measures of time, and formed as we now are of soul and body, it would be like removing the regulator, or balance wheel, of the whole system. The inner as well as the outer machinery would run down. Our souls would become chaotic, our thoughts unregulated; our life a dream, in which past phenomena, present sensations, and future imaginations would be mingled in hopeless confusion. For the want of such a regulator, man with his boasted intellect would sink below all that is known of the condition of the savage. For this reason alone, had there been no other, he could not have existed with his present mental and bodily organization in the ante-solar periods, or before these arrangements for recurring vicissitudes and regular times had been brought into operation.

Vegetable life might have been supported long before. Warmth and light, if necessary, might have been produced, in all required abundance, from chemical agencies solely terrestrial. Animals, we are expressly told, commenced existence after the celestial ordinations of the fourth period; but, for all that science could say to the contrary, there might have been some species of torpid animal natures millions of years before the sun was appointed to rule the day. Man, however, with his present physical and spiritual constitution, could not have existed as man,—that is, as a comparing, assimilating, time-measuring intellect, whose most constant and practical exercise of rationality consists in judging the future by the past, through the aid of those regulated divisions without which his conceptions of both would present only a dark and formless abyss. In other words, without some such arrangement, he must either rise above time and “be as Gods,” that is, think as God thinks, or fall below it, into that state which is alone adapted to the irrational animal nature.

“*He made the stars also.*” In the Hebrew the expression is peculiar. It is without any governing verb, and seems to come in by way of a note in passing. Moses does not say that he made the stars to give light upon the earth, although this may be inferred from the connection. Much less does he say that he made them for no other purpose. The mention of the moon and the night makes this the proper place to speak of them, if they are to be alluded to at all, and the writer makes this brief note or scholium,—“He made the stars also;” or, still more concisely,—“the stars also.” When, and

how, and why? In respect to these questions no information is given to us. It is, however, still objected to the Mosaic account, that it seems to represent the celestial bodies—certainly the sun with its huge bulk—as having been made for the use of our earth, and for such use alone. But giving the language such a meaning as the objection demands, and laying aside all such considerations as we before adverted to in respect to the comparative insignificance of mere space magnitude, the representation might still be maintained as being in accordance with that oldest and truest philosophy that regards the universe as a kosmos, or unity, in which each part is made for the whole; whilst no less really and truly may it be conversely said, that the whole is in some way for each and every part.

Moses may not have known of any other uses. But he knew from his reason, as well as from God's inspiration, that whatever in the physical world anything statedly and regularly does, that thing it was designed to do. To the pious soul, the a priori argument here is not only first, but strongest. It starts with the designer, and thence infers the design in the fact. Thus it operates, and thus, therefore, was it intended to operate. In this view the sun and moon were certainly made to give light upon the earth, and to *rule* the earth's seasons whatever other designs may have been in their creation, or their appointment with reference to our own world. The interpretation does not demand it, and yet we may extend the same view to the stars. The light they give the earth could hardly have been in the writer's mind at all, but the other use may have been intended, and that, too, with great propriety. They rule the seasons and the

years; that is, they regulate our knowledge of them; and in the early ages of the world, were almost the only means for this end. They furnished the rule or canon by which they were determined. The first nations had no other almanack than the rolling heavens. Spring and summer, plowing, sowing, and reaping time, were regulated by the rising and setting of certain constellations. Their use in this respect is referred to, not only by the Greek and Latin poets, but also in the Bible. “Canst thou bring out Mazzaroth in its seasons?” The “bands of Orion” are the iron chains of the wintry frosts and storms; the “sweet influences of Pleiades” represent the return of the genial vernal season, and of that reviviscence of nature of which the heliocentric rising of this beautiful constellation was the well known rule or signal. The thought is admirably expressed by the old poet Aratus, in the beginning of his *Phaenomena*.

ὁ δ' ἥπιος ἀνθρώποισι

δεξιὰ σημαίνει ———

Αὐτὸς γὰρ τάγε ΣΗΜΑΤ' ἐν οὐρανῷ ἐστῆριξεν.

The stars' propitious power he shows to men,  
And high in heav'n firm binds their ruling signs.

One might almost fancy it a free translation of the very language of Moses,—“He set them in the firmament for *signs*, and for seasons, and for days, and for years.” In the same manner Cicero speaks of them as the moderators or *rulers* (ἡγεμόνες) of those temporal vicissitudes, by the accurate knowledge of which man is distinguished from the brute. Cum videmus vicissitudines dierum atque noctium, commutationesque temporum quadripartitas, ad maturitatem frugum et ad temperationem corporum aptas, eorumque omnium *moderatores* et ducem solem, lunamque quasi fastorum notis *signantem*

dies,—tum quinque stellas eosdem cursus constantissime servantas, etc. Tusc. Quæes. I, 28.

These important uses they serve, and we may therefore truly say, as far as our earth is concerned, that for such purposes they were manifested in the firmament. A one-sided science may object to the language, but a more catholic philosophy endorses it without scruple. In such philosophy the idea of a perfect organic whole is that in which the whole and all the parts are mutually and reciprocally ends and means,—not only each part for the whole, which is the finding of a mere mechanical physics, but the whole for each, and each for each. The remotest systems have a bearing upon our earth, and our earth on the remotest systems. No part is what it would be, except as such a part of such a whole. It is from this idea, grossly perverted as it may have been, came the old astrology. The destiny of each world, the destiny of each man, was supposed to vary according to the state of the universe when he came into being. The doctrine was founded upon a glorious thought which more than redeems its superstitious abuses. It was the oneness of the kosmos,—an idea which, even when held in connection with the grossest ignorance in respect to facts, is of more value than any science, however accurate and extensive, that does not make it the beginning and the end of all its investigations.

In connection with this, there comes up a thought analogous to one on which we have before dwelt at some length. In setting forth the facts of creation, the Mosaic record takes as their representatives the most outward or obvious phenomena, that is, “the things that are seen,” and that *appear* the same for all eyes and for all ages. Science takes the more interior phenomena, but

revelation could not adopt any language built upon them, because the farther or more inward progress of science is ever rendering it obsolete. So, also, when the Bible speaks of USES, it takes those more obvious and outward ones which all minds at once acknowledge. In this way it answers its great end of being universally, and for all times, intelligible, without contradicting, or coming in collision with, any other phenomena, or any other uses which the progress of scientific discovery may bring to light. Science boasts of having ascertained other offices for the sun, beside that of giving light upon the earth and exercising a dominion over our thoughts in the regulation of years and seasons. But has she yet determined the great design—we mean the great physical design—which embraces all others, and to which all partial ends are incidental or subordinate? Can she give the highest or most ultimate physical reason for the sun or the solar system? Is it likely she will ever discover, or even approximate to, this design, or this reason, in its bearing upon other systems, and other systems of systems, and so on to the entire universe of material being? If she, too, then, must be content with *intermediate uses*, let her adore the higher wisdom of revelation, in taking those which, although seemingly the most partial and local, do present, in fact, a language so much surpassing her own in impressiveness, in catholicity, in enduring moral power. Let astronomy be carried ever so far theoretically, the great *practical uses* of the stars to us will continue to be the accurate determination of the year, the regulation of the seasons, and the safe navigation of ships. For these uses, therefore, if not created, they were at least appointed, and *revealed* to our earth.

## CHAPTER XVI.

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### WORK OF THE FIFTH DAY.

PRODUCTION OF THE ANIMAL RACES.—PRODUCTION OUT OF THE EARTH.—LITERAL SENSE.—COMMON PREJUDICES.—MUST NOT BE AFRAID OF NATURALISM.—HEBREW WORDS OF PRODUCTION.—DEFINITION OF NATURE.—DISCRETE DEGREES CAN NEVER PASS INTO EACH OTHER.—THE SUPERNATURAL.—THE CONNATURAL.—THE CONTRA-NATURAL.—THE UNNATURAL.—WORDS FOR GROWTH AND BIRTH IMPLY DURATION.—THEORIES OF ANIMAL PRODUCTION.—MILTON.—OLD GREEK FANCIES.—THE OMNIFIC WORD.—A NATURE IN THE EARTH.

To this period belong the birth and growth of the animal races. We would, however, take in connection with it the germination of plants, which, the reader will recollect, was reserved for subsequent discussion under this head, because of its presenting the same questions and having the same bearing upon our general argument respecting the true nature of the creative days. Going back, therefore, to the third period, we find there, as here, a peculiar feature in the account to which sufficient attention has not been given.

And here, especially, would we appeal to those who assume to be the exclusive advocates of the fair and literal interpretation, or contend that we must take language in its most obvious and ordinary sense. It has been shown, that in determining this easy sense, everything depends on getting a true position in respect to a writing so ancient and on a subject so much out of the track of ordinary ideas. But have these advocates of literalism well weighed the literal, and, as it would seem, only possible meaning of the words here employed? The writer, too,

is in favor of the *literal sense*, that is, the true sense, made out by the most sober consideration of everything which should control our view of the proper significance of language. Let us, then, follow the record wherever it leads us; even though it may sometimes seem to favor naturalism, in opposition to what might be thought to be the more pious conclusion. We know nothing about these old matters but what the Bible tells us. Science here is dumb. Geology finds very ancient vegetable and animal remains, but gives us no light whatever on the questions, whence they came, or how they commenced the origin of their existence. In no part of the history of creation are we thrown more completely on the record; in no part is the language less suggestive of anything out of the most common significance of terms; and yet it is not a little singular that no commentators are more prepared to break over the common senses of words, and to do violence to language here, than those who are the most narrow in their interpretations elsewhere, and especially in those parts where the widest significance would seem to be demanded by the whole aspect of the account.

There are some common opinions which affect our view of the ordinary sense of the words, and yet these opinions or prejudices could never have come from the mere study of the passage itself. They may be thought to be more pious, more in accordance with what, in our conception, is due to the Divine dignity; but they involve a departure from the literal sense, or anything like the literal sense, much wider, to say the least, than an interpretation which only follows one of the most universal laws of language in giving an indefinite sense to a word of time.



A common opinion is, that the first vegetable and animal formations were direct acts of God; and most of those who hold it think, perhaps, that they have derived it from the Scriptural statements. This opinion presents two aspects. Some would maintain, that, as in the origin of man, they proceeded in each case from a primitive pair, or from a primitive individual, or specific progenitor the immediate creation of the Divine hand, and had thence, from such individual centre, spread themselves over all those parts of the earth in which they are to be found. Another theory would regard them as created in numbers, and assigned to their positions in all quarters of the globe, thus constituting a great many centers of production. In both cases the original plants and animals would be direct creations, coming immediately from the ab-extra plastic power, or mechanical shaping of the Deity. But certainly, the account does not tell us anything like this. There is no language from which we could infer it. There is nothing in any other parts of the context that would shut us up to it. There are no metaphors which would in any way imply it. There are no words containing the germs of ideas which could possibly be expanded so as to embrace such a conception. Nay, more, any interpretation of the kind, even had there been something in the context to favor it, is directly excluded by the positive assertion of a process which involves the contrary supposition.

“And God said,—*Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed (or seeding seed) after its kind, and the fruit tree yielding fruit whose seed is in itself, after its kind, and it was so—And the earth brought forth,*” etc. Here are two distinct things—the going

forth of the Divine Omnific Word, as in the other creative periods, and the productive power, energy, or energising of the earth. This latter is expressed by two different, yet kindred Hebrew verbs. One of them, נִצַּח, means properly to germinate, (Greek, βλαστῆσαι,—Vulgate, *germinare*,) to bud, or to sprout, as in Joel, ii, 22. “For the pastures of the wilderness do *spring*, the tree beareth fruit; the fig tree and the vine do yield their strength,”—βεβλάστηκεν τὰ πεδία—*Quia germinaverunt speciosa deserti*. There it is applied in Kal to the plant. Here in Hiphil, it has for its subject the earth,—“Let the earth germinate, *or cause to germinate*.” It is the causal or causative conjugation, and although we would not attach much importance to this standing alone and unsupported by the context, yet in the connection in which we here find it, it is certainly worthy of note. The other Hebrew word means precisely what the English does, *to come forth*, and in the Hiphil conjugation which is here used, *to cause to come forth, or out, to bring forth*—to give birth to, *nasci facere*, or *cause to be born*, which is the special sense it has, Job, x, 18, Isaiah, lxxv, 9, and other places. The earth then was not a mere passive recipient, nor was production by it a mere outward unessential mode, having no other than an arbitrary connection with the Divine working, or employed merely as an accompanying sign; but the earth exerts a real causative power, and this becomes an essential and important part in the chain of causation which God saw fit to originate and establish. The Divine power was exerted, but it was *upon* the earth, and *through* the earth. It was *upon* the nature and *through* the nature that had become established in the previous creative acts, whilst,

at the same time, there is the beginning of a new energy imparted to this nature which it did not possess before. The command is to the earth; but the earth is not passive. She exerts an active obedience in the exercise of the old nature modified by the new force which comes from the supernatural Omnic Word going forth, as it previously did for the separation of the light from the chaos and the waters from the waters. Before, it was said, "Let there be light," and now again, *Let there be life*—and life began to be. As in all the other periods, so here there was doubtless the instantaneous beginning of a new, and, at first, supernatural force put into nature. Vegetable life had a moment when it began to be,—a new thing upon the earth, unborn and undeveloped out of anything previously existing. The earth, by any natural power previously imparted, or previously exercised, would never have produced it; but then, when the new energy is imparted, the mode, or law of production, is *through* the earth.

This work might have been direct and instantaneous; and there would have been no difficulty in believing such a declaration, had it been made. Reason has no difficulty in admitting the supernatural. The devout mind loves to believe it when clearly revealed, and is ever most fond of those parts of the Bible in which it is most boldly set forth. It loves to read how nature, ever so obedient to her Lord, is sometimes commanded to stand away from His Presence. It loves to read how God came down on Sinai, and Christ rose in the clouds before the gaze of the wondering disciples. But here the language just as clearly conveys the idea of a *natural* process, or *going on*, after a supernatural origin. The

germination, the bringing forth, the growth, the seeding, the yielding, each after its kind, implying previous types, laws, or ideas, according to which they grew,—all this has the appearance of a *natural* process. It is a *nature*, a being *born*, if we can attach any meaning to such a word, and to suppose all evolved by a rapid crowding of causalities into a period equal to one of our present solar days, is not to maintain the supernatural, but the unnatural. Strange as this would be, still if it were the fair meaning of the language, we would not hesitate to yield to it any opposing hypothesis, however cherished; for we have no other guide here than the Scriptures. With all reverence, however, and with every caution lest we might be in the wrong, must we say, that such a proceeding would appear to be neither nature nor miracle. It would seem to lack what we must regard as the most essential features of the one, whilst it would have only an unreal semblance of the other.

A few distinctions and definitions may be needed here to place this subject in a clearer light. The only idea we have of nature is that of a regular, constant flow of cause and effect governed by established laws operating uniformly, or ever in the same manner under the same circumstances, and with the same accompaniments. Phenomenally, it is a continual *coming out*, *growth*, (*φύσις*), or *birth* of one thing from another, or as its etymology imports, a *being born*, (*natura*), or a *being about to be born*, from something that has gone before, and, at the same time, a giving birth to something which is to follow. We cannot conceive of it except as having had a beginning at some time, and from something out of itself. From the necessity, therefore, of our laws of

thinking, as well as from revelation, we say, that it is a power given originally by God. But though thus originated, we can distinctly conceive of it as a nature only when we regard it as in some manner left to itself, and operating by its own laws or methods. How this should be we cannot understand; and yet we must adopt some distinction of fact between the prime originating supernatural energy and the subsequent ongoing, or we resolve God into nature and nature into God,—thus running into atheism on the one hand, or an equally godless pantheism on the other. We may suppose this original divine force ever present as the supporting ground, but not *im-manent* or *per-manent* as the immediate causal force in every natural effect. We must believe that God is able to impart such a natural power, and leave it, in this sense, to itself,—thus making it something different from the immediate divine energy. Those who hold, with Malbranche, and others, that there is ever the immanent divine presence in every act of nature, do, in fact, diminish, instead of magnifying, the divine power and dignity. It is simply maintaining that God cannot make a nature, and hence, of course, that there is nothing supernatural, because, in fact, there is nothing truly natural. It is unmeaning, too, and absurd, since it supposes *media* which are, in truth, no *media*, but only arbitrary *signs*, having no dynamical connection with the effects. Nature, in this view, would be as irrational as a machinery having all the appearance of mediate dynamical causation, and yet requiring the constant application of the original motive force directly to every wheel, and cog, and strap, in the complicated structure.

Holding nature thus to be, in some sense, a self-subsisting, self-acting power, we may next regard it in its extent and its degree. It may be the universal nature, that is, the whole nature of the universe in all its connected and interdependent organization as one great force developing itself by laws which God has given it. Or it may be a partial nature, such, for example, as the nature of the earth, or of some still less organism, such as that of a tree, or an animal, developing itself by its own internal law, as modified by its connection with the universal. Again, in respect to degree. There may be an inchoate, an imperfect, or rudimentary nature, which is preparatory to some higher stage; which higher stage will be generated, not *through* any unaided development of the old, but by the supernatural interposition, when the old or lower nature has prepared the way for the new Word and the new Presence. Again. Every nature, whether of the whole or a part, whether inchoate or advanced, must be finite. There are limits to its working which it cannot pass; there is a height above which it cannot rise. The one ground power, and the from time to time superadded powers, if there are such, can only develop themselves to a certain degree which is their maximum. When this is arrived at, the nature must do one of three things. It must either stop entirely, or go on unlimitedly at the maximum development and in the same plane,—which we think we could show to be impossible,—or it must return and continually repeat itself in an ever waxing and waning cycle. But it can never, of itself, get above the original force as controlled by the original finite law.

In every nature, too, regarded by itself, 'there must be continuity. The mind demands this as involved in the very idea of a nature. There can be within it no discrete degrees. Its law can have no leaps; it must be an *unbroken* law, or law of continuity. Every effect, or out-working, must have something in common with the cause which precedes it, and out of which it flows, or which may be also said to flow into it. Hence, however it may seem to change, such change is only the outward growth of the cause varying in manner and degree as it proceeds from its latent to its phenomenal state. This is the law of each several nature within its own bounds. But beyond these bounds, the different natures, or the different scales, must be parted from each other by discrete supernatural beginnings. The continuity from nature to nature is severed by impassable chasms. Thus we may say of the ascending degrees, inert matter, motion, organic growth proceeding from within, outward self-motion or locomotion, mere animation, appetite, choice, the rational will, and rationality itself; they are all distinct from each other; they never can *come out of*, or be born, (*nata, naturata, γηγνώμενα*,) that is, proceed *naturally* from each other. So says the revelation which God has made to us in the laws of our own minds, and by which we interpret the revelation He has made to us in nature. By these laws of our thinking it is made impossible for us to conceive of one of these states being the other, or being involved in the other. They are parted by chasms, across which no mere nature can ever leap. Any other supposition would involve a war of ideas, or the contradiction which our scientific naturalists are sometimes so fond of using,—*ex nihilo nihil*—nothing can ever come

from nothing. It is just as certain, too, that more can never come from less.

To apply this, then, we may say, that the old nature existing in the earth previous to the destined period, could never have produced the first dawning of vegetable life. It could not have given birth to the lowest fungus. We infer this, too, not merely from our sensible knowledge of nature's phenomena, or our reasoning about her potentialities, but from the express revelation of the fact, that here the Divine creative Word again goes forth. Had the development been wrapped up in the previous nature, there would have been no need of this, and therefore, no distinct creative day or period for the work.

Again. Nature must not only be finite in extent, and degree of its power, but must have a certain duration as viewed by the finite mind. It is only comprehensible to us as a *flow* or *succession*. To the Deity, as we have said before, all the effects, or as we may more properly say, the *whole effect* is in the cause. And since to Him—with all reverence would we venture the opinion—powers and potencies are the higher realities, it is all *effectum*, all *done*, all completed or summed in the original causative energy; and hence, speaking *more humano*, may we say, that to Him it is instantaneous. To us, although we know that the flow of a nature must be continuous, and that every *effect* must be *in* the cause, and ever coming *out* of the cause, yet still must it present (to our finite sense at least) the appearance of steps or degrees. Hence, too, for us, to whom the phenomenal are the realities, or the nearest realities, nature must have succession, and succession for finite minds is duration longer or shorter in its seeming, according to the



manner, or number, or apparent separation of successive events (or *out-comings*) as they present themselves like points on which the eye can rest in the steady flowing stream.

If any one ask,—Why does God work in this way? what need has he of natures? We can only say, “So it seemeth good in his sight.” He could doubtless have made all things differently, but then we know it would not have been the best way, because He has not adopted it. He works through nature, or a succession of natures, no one developing another, yet each preparing the way for the one that is to succeed. We see enough of the universe to know that this is the method, and thus considered, the general view is unaffected by the measure of duration. It is of no importance to the argument, whether the flow seem more or less rapid as viewed from our stand-point, or as measured by the shorter periods of that exactly divided physical system to which our thinking, that is, our flow of ideas, has become conformed. It is still the same great principle, whether it appears in the growth of the fungus, the “son of a night,” in the growth of the plant that lives for years, in the growth of a tree that endures for centuries, in the growth of worlds whose cyclical law extends through æons or ages, embracing a duration equal, perhaps, to millennial or millio-millennial recurrences of such cycles as are made by our exact sun-measured years. It is the great principle for which we contend; and this established, it certainly ought to guide us in our interpretations of a record which professes to reveal the creative acts of God.

If we thus view nature as a stream of causation governed by a certain law which not only regulates but limits its movements, then the *supernatural*, as its name imports, would be *all above nature*,—in other words, that power of God which is employed “according to the counsel of his own will” in originating, controlling, limiting, increasing, opposing, or terminating nature, whether it be the universal or any particular or partial nature. Thus regarded, the supernatural would assume various aspects to which we may give distinctive names. As originating nature, we may call it the *ante-natural*. As adding a new force to a previously existing nature, it may be styled *praeter-natural*, although there are some uses of the word that might vary from this idea. If such new power, though higher than the previous nature, is in harmony with it, and works *through* it, thus producing a higher order of results, though still *through* it and by it, then it may be named the *con-natural*,—since, in this manner, in connection with the old, it truly becomes itself a new nature. When the Divine power is in immediate and direct opposition to nature, breaking through its laws, and producing events the opposite of what would have come out of its unobstructed sequences, then may we rightly call it the *contra-natural*—such as are those interpositions that are generally termed miraculous.

But there is another aspect still, which we would attempt to define, although it does not fall in so readily with our laws of thinking as the others, and may, therefore, appear to involve inconsistencies. There may be the conception of a supernatural power working *through* a nature, or said thus to work through it, (as far as lan-

guage can convey such an idea,) and yet in opposition to it, or in a manner which is not in harmony with it,— or, in other words, without any regard to the laws, or successions of time, or orderly phenomenal manifestations of that previous nature *through* which it is said thus to work. This may be called not the supra-natural, or the contra-natural, or the con-natural, but the *un-natural*. It is not the supra-natural strictly, for it is expressly said to work through an existing nature. We mean, it is not the supernatural in its method of operation, although it may be such in its origin. On the other hand, it is not nature; for it is at war with the settled processes of her ongoing. This, then, is the epithet by which we must characterize the work of the third and fifth days, if we attempt to reconcile the Bible language to the idea of a φύσις, or *natura*, that is of a birth and growth out of the earth of all plants, herbs, trees, etc., (*from the seminal beginning to the end of the natural increment*;) by an energizing process in the earth and through the earth, and yet all in the duration of one solar day. The objection is not to the supernatural, or to the idea of marvellous rapidity in itself considered, but to the *un-naturalness* of the proceeding. It is the *seeming nature* implied in the language, but which, instead of being really such, is at war with all the ideas that the laws of our mind compel us to associate with the word natural. The best name for it would be found in that strange term, *magical*, as indicative of some incomprehensible as well as inconceivable process with which we cannot connect the idea either of law or miracle.

Here, then, comes up clearly and strongly the point we would wish to present. We must not take words

out of their ordinary use, it is said. This is the whole length and strength of the objection. Day means twenty-four hours, and so all minds understand it. But certainly the Hebrew word *yom* does not so inseparably carry with it the conception of a certain unvarying short duration, as the terms of birth and growth here applied to the nutritive and parturitive action of the earth connect themselves with the ideas of a longer duration. If we cannot separate the word day from the thought of twenty-four of our present hours, then, a fortiori atque a fortissimo, do we say, that we cannot separate such a process as the growth of a plant, or of a tree, through all the regular sequences, such as the germination, the parturition, the growth, the seeding, the ripening, etc., from the conception of a season, to say the least, or many seasons. To admit the process, and yet deny the associated period of duration, or that it had the successive steps, is a war of ideas, as well as of language.

We are not told that the parturitive powers of the earth, when they first began to be exercised, were very different from what they are now. They may have been more rapid, or more slow; but if it was a real physical energy governed by law, and not merely an arbitrary sign of a contra-natural power, it must, at least, have had a harmony in its workings, such a harmony as would have required that the widely varying among its diversified effects should bear some ratio to the greater strength or longer duration in the cause. It would not have brought out the full-formed, full-grown, and ripened cedar of Lebanon, in the same time it required for giving birth to the mushroom. No intimation is given that the first growth, after the instantaneous starting power, or the

utterance of the creative Word, was not as natural as any that followed. We are the rather led to believe that this first growth gave the law to all subsequent production. If the first plants or trees did not come from a previous organized seed, the first seeds, at all events, grew out of the plant, and as far as the language gives us any idea, in a similar manner, and by a similar law, and in a corresponding time, or succession of times, to that which regulated any subsequent seeding, or ripening, or fructification of the parent organism.

Did the writer of the creative history think of anything but a natural growth, originated, it is true, by a Divine power, but still a natural growth with all its successive steps and changes? Yes, the objector may say,—he must have thought so to be consistent with his other idea of a day of twenty-four hours. But with how much force may this be turned the other way. Moses does speak of growth; all the terms employed are consistent with such an idea; the more we examine into their very roots, the more does this *φύσις* generation, or *nature* appear, and, therefore, we say, he was not limited, and did not consider himself limited, by any such notion of time as our interpreters would force upon him.

To get away from this, we must say, that it was not a *growth*, a *nature*, a *genesis*,—for all these terms are synonymous. But what was it, then? What possible meaning in the strange procedure? Had we been told, that instantly, by the Divine fiat, the earth was covered with vegetation of the largest and most perfect kind, that in a moment there stood forth in all their physical perfection the “creeping hyssop,” the rose of Sharon, and the waving cedar of Lebanon, that in the twinkling of an eye,

from being a barren, inanimate, and solitary waste, our world was swarming with animals of every size and species, full grown, and at the maximum of their strength and beauty, there would have been no a priori difficulty in believing it. There would have been nothing irrational or incredible in the account. Such an instantaneous production would have been in harmony with all our ideas of the Divine power and dignity. But it has not been so revealed. A different method was taken by the Divine Wisdom,—the method to which we give the name of nature,—the method of growth, of succession, of duration, of the apparent birth of one thing out of another, and this, too, through the action of a previous nature quickened by a new *Word* into a new energy, and to the development of a new law. Both these suppositions, we say, are rational, both are pious, both are credible if clearly revealed.

But there are other hypotheses which are not rational, which are not credible, which do not enhance our ideas of the Divine dignity, or the glory of the creative work, and which are, moreover, most difficult to reconcile with any fair interpretation of the Biblical language. One is, that the trees and animals were formed directly by the hand of God, and then placed in the earth that it might *bring them forth*, or be said to bring them forth, thus perfectly formed. Another is, that by the same direct divine power, they were formed *in* the earth, but not through any natural agency of the earth; the formative act, not being a nature, or a growth, but as far as the earth was concerned, outward, mechanical, or magical; and even the *bringing forth* being by no natural power acting through any previous, or then imparted law.

Another is, that the seeds of vegetables were formed perfect by direct Divine power, and then planted in the earth. But all have this feature. They present the appearance of a causation which is not a causation. They are forced ideas which come from a supposed *exigentia loci*, and not from any fair and harmonious interpretation of language. They seem unworthy of the Divine character. With all reverence be it said, they have not the dignity of the instantaneous act which demands no appearance of any accompanying media, whilst they lack the beautiful consistency of a true nature. Even the last escapes the difficulty no better than the others. The seed is as much an organism as the plant or tree,—far more so than the bark, or branch, or root. It has the same *appearance* of growth, or of having grown from a younger state; it suggests the same idea of succession, or *natural* process. Divine Omnipotence could make them, doubtless; but so, also, it could have made the perfect tree or animal. It is liable, therefore, to the same charge of unmeaningness, of inconsistency, of apparent fallacy, of having neither the *reason* of the supernatural, nor the *law* of the natural.

We may say, moreover, of them all, that they have too much the look of the legendary, the peculiarities of which are, not the marvellous, the supernatural—these may enter into the most sober and rational narrative—but the dreamy, the fantastic, the grotesque, the unmeaning violation of all the unities, or all the harmonies, of time, place, and causation. From such distorted traditions of the passage came probably the gross fancies of some of the old Ionic philosophers as we find them set forth in the verses of Lucretius; only there the grotesque work

is ascribed to an unnatural nature, not to God. Hence, too, Milton's picture, which, although merely poetical, presents probably the conception that has been most common among a certain class of interpreters who would make the twenty-four hour rule the one to which every thing else in reason, nature, and language, must conform. Even as a picture it is unnatural. It is like some of the inartistic drawings on the old tapestries, where every thing stands right out in the foreground without shade or perspective.

"The earth obeyed; and straight  
Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth  
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,  
Limb'd and full grown. *Out of the ground* uprose  
As from his lair the wild beast, where he wons  
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den.  
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked:  
The cattle in the fields and meadows green  
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks,  
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.  
*The grassy clods now calved; now half appeared*  
*The tawny lion pawing to get free*  
*His hinder parts*, then springs as broke from bonds,  
And rampant shakes his brinded main: the ounce,  
The libbard, and the tiger, *as the mole*  
*Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw*  
In hillocks: the swift stag *from under ground*  
*Bore up his branching head*; scarce from his mould  
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved  
His vastness."

In setting forth the suddenness of the work as a supposed exhibition of the divine omnipotence, Milton is truly sublime; but in attempting to connect the earth with the animal productions, as he was led to do by his view of the passage, he descends to the grotesque and even to the ludicrous. That image of the tawny lion *pawing to get free his hinder parts*, and of Behemoth upheaving the earth under which he is buried, like a mole coming



out of the ground, falls in dignity, we must say it, beneath the wildest Greek conceptions of earth-born Typhons, centaurs,

“Gorgons, hydras, and chimaeras dire.”

We would speak with reverence of what to any minds might seem to be the meaning of the Scriptures; but could this sense have been intended? Wild as the Greek fables are, there is some meaning and method in their grotesque fancies. Centaurs may have been the production of some law of nature, or they may have been direct divine creations intended to subserve some wise purpose in the chronological developments of our world. There is nothing in either supposition that can be called irrational. But the emerging of lions and behemoths out of the earth, when the earth, after all, has nothing to do with their generation, no *natural* connection with their formation or their growth, would seem to be, not merely wild or grotesque, but absurd, not merely marvelous, but unmeaning. It would also be a deception. It would present the appearance of a *nature* where there is none in reality; it would give us the seeming of *law* where there is no dynamical connection, and where the associated sequences, even if we would regard them merely as signs, are significant of no intelligible purpose or idea.

But when we take the passage in its whole connection it has nothing of this grotesque or legendary aspect. The impression it produces is one of gravest dignity. In its general effect, and still more in the conceptions which lie at the roots of its most important terms, it forces upon the mind the idea of a *nature in the earth* acting through a real dynamical process of its own, and in periods, which, whether longer or shorter, contain

within themselves all the changes and successive stages which we find it impossible to dissociate from the thought of birth and growth. And this, too, of the animal as well as of the vegetable worlds. There is no more difficulty in the one case than in the other. One may be higher than the other; but both, we are plainly taught in the Scriptures, are products of nature and matter acting through laws and energies quickened to a higher work by a new command and a new Presence of the Creative Word.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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### WORK OF THE FIFTH DAY.

GROWTH FROM THE EARTH.—WAS IT A GROWTH OF INDIVIDUALS OR OF SPECIES?—EITHER VIEW MAY BE PIOUSLY HELD.—THE *Acari* INSECTS AND MR. CROSS.—NATURE A STREAM.—A SUPERNATURAL SEED DROPPED INTO IT.—HOW DID THE FIRST PLANTS GROW?—THE FIRST ANIMALS.—HEBREW WORDS EMPLOYED.—WE MUST KEEP CLOSE TO THE RECORD.—THE GREAT WHALES.—SCIENCE CAN TRACE FOOTSTEPS BUT TELL US NOTHING OF ORIGIN.

WHEN we are once led to admit that the work of the third and of the fifth period was through such a process as we may fairly call *nature*, or the natural, we may regard ourselves as having the simple conception as it lay in the mind of the writer, and the question of longer or shorter duration becomes one altogether of secondary consequence. All that is required is that the idea of time and its successions be not out of harmony with the main thought. Exact measures, of course, are out of the question, but we can say generally, that in harmonizing the conception it is the work must measure the day, and not the day the work. Both, we think, can be preserved in perfect consistency, but if either is to be favored in our minds at the expense of the other, duration is the secondary idea. The causality must expand the time instead of being limited by it, or crowded into unnatural dimensions while assuming to be a natural process.

Our views, however, of such duration would be modified in no slight degree, according as we adopt one or the

other of two theories of growth or development. Assuming that there was a real nature, or production out of the earth, the question might still be raised,—was it a growth, in the first place, of individuals or of species. The one conception is connected in our minds with years and seasons made up of the lesser diurnal cycles, the other with ages, or æonic cycles of cycles, the olams and æons of the Bible, or the *great years* (the *magni anni*) of the philosophical imagination. In the one case we must suppose the Divine Word energizing in as many specific acts, or beginnings, as there are species of vegetable and animal life. Each species or genus is a separate spermatogenic word (σπερματικὸς λόγος) or, at least, a separate and distinct energizing of the one Universal Word. In the other view, the original divine power may be supposed to have originated the new order of life in its most generic or universal germ, and all subordinate genera and species may have been developed from it, and from each other, by the action of nature under this new power, and in obedience to the new law, or the new modification of previous law, thus and then imparted to it. In this way species would grow out of species, as individuals out of individuals. There would be an ascent from the first rudiments of vegetable and animal life to the higher and more perfect *growths*, or *natures*. It would be the same *word* repeating, yet expanding, itself in every ascending species, just as it is the same specific word repeating itself in every individual birth which the laws of the maternal nature are ever bringing out from the seminal energy.

What science would say to this we do not clearly know, nor are we much concerned about her decisions. An immense time, as well as an immense accumulation

of data, are required to give them any claim upon our confidence. Neither, on the other hand, if it be most in harmony with the language of the Bible, would we be concerned about the charge of naturalism. A development theory which has no divine origination, or acknowledges the going forth in time of no Divine Word, is indeed atheism. That which acknowledges only one divine origination, and this from the logical necessity of getting a starting-point for physical speculation, is as near to atheism as it can be. It hath said in its *heart*, There is no God, and the only thing which prevents it from being also the conclusion of the mere scientific intellect, is this logical impediment which God has mercifully put in its way. But a development theory in the sense of species from species, as well as of individual from individual, may be as pious as any other. It may have as many Divine interpositions as any other. It may be regarded as a method of God's working, and that, too, as rationally and as reverently as the more limited system to which we give the name of nature in its ordinary or more limited sense. Modern theologians have been too much frightened by certain assumptions and speculations on this field. It may well be doubted whether Mr. Cross ever produced insects under the circumstances which he maintains to have given birth to his famous *acari*, but there is no rational difficulty, and no impiety in the supposition that the Divine Word which first originated and gave law to animal life, may have connected its development with certain chemical conditions which science may discover, as well as with the presence of a seed in certain states of air and heat, or, in other words, those seminal conditions under which as yet, as far as

our experience goes, the phenomenon has received its manifestation. But there is no place here for any such speculations; since, as far as our philological argument is concerned, either view satisfies its requirements. It is enough for us to learn, without doing any violence to the language of the account, that the production of the vegetable and animal races are set forth as having been originally a *φύσις*, or *growth*—a growth out of the earth, and by and through the earth, in other words, a nature with its laws, stages, successions, and developments.

There was a previous nature in the earth, whether it had been in operation for twenty-four hours, or twenty-four thousand years. We may compare this to a stream flowing on and having its regular current of law, or regulated succession of cause and effect. Into this stream, we may say, there was dropped a new power, supernatural, yet not contra-natural, or unnatural—varying the old flow and raising it to a higher law and a higher energy, yet still in harmony with it. New causations, or new modifications of causation arise, and after the successions and steps required, be they longer or shorter, a world of vegetation is the result of this chain of causation in the one period, and through an analogous, if not similar process, an animal creation arose in another. Our mode of argument may be denounced as metaphysical, and yet it is but the analysis of a common thought, which every man who examines his own mind will find that he has in connection with the words *nature*, *growth*, etc., or the terms that in all languages grow out of roots corresponding to those that are here employed in this plain narrative of the Bible.

We have no guide here but the Scriptures, and if they say the earth brought forth the vegetable and animal races, we will believe it, without any fear of scientific objections on the one hand, or the charge of an impious naturalizing on the other. We feel that we are in a region where we must tread cautiously, for it is sacred ground ; yet still there is nothing left but to follow what seems to be the fair and natural meaning of the language. The first plants *grew*, they were made to grow *in* the earth, and *by* the earth, and *out* of the earth. They were *born* of the earth ; they were carried in her womb during their respective periods of gestation ; their embryo or foetal life was fed from her warmth and moisture ; and they afterwards were nurtured and grew up, each to its perfection, on her maternal bosom. They *grew* ; and *growth* is the cardinal idea of the word nature.

The same thing, or a similar thing, is said of the animals. And God said,—“*Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life.*” Genesis, i, 20. This refers to the fish and reptile races, and what would seem more strange, to the birds, who are connected with them in a manner which would appear to imply some community or similarity of origin. And again,—“*Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind.*” This refers to the quadrupeds and land animals generally. In the first passage, it might be said that יִשְׂרָאֵל has simply the intransitive sense, although the subject is הַמַּיִם, *the waters*. “Let the waters *swarm with*,” or *abound with*. If the word stood alone, there might be some room for such a supposition ; but its use in other passages, and its connections here

force us to give it the sense of prolific breeding,\* and to regard it as causal in the same manner as  $\text{אָרְבָּה}$  and  $\text{אֲרִיב}$  and  $\text{אֲרִיב}$ , in the passage above, and in the verse below. † This causal signification is given to it both in the Septuagint and Vulgate versions, and it is clear that those early translators could have had no other thought in their minds.  $\text{Καὶ ἔειπεν ὁ θεός, ἐξαγαγέτω τὰ ὕδατα ἐρπετὰ ψυχῶν ζώσων. Dixit etiam Deus producant aquae reptile animae viventis.}$

We have referred to the objection which suggests itself to some pious minds. The idea that living vegetable organisms, and especially that the animal races, came from the operation of natural law, even with the salvo that God in his own way, and at his own pleasure, had ordained the beginning and exact continuance of such laws, seems to such to savor of naturalism and impiety. Hence the anxiety manifested by some commentators in discussing the question whether the earth, in these productions, exerted an active force, or only a passive reciprocity—*Gravior est quæstio, quatenus aquae jubeantur producere reptilia activene an materialiter, an tantum passive.* ‡ But we say again,—Let us follow God's revelation wherever it may lead us. We have really nothing else to guide us here. Let us follow it reverently and

\* In Genesis, viii, 17, it is used in connection with  $\text{בָּרָה}$ , the universal term for *fructification*. There it is applied to the generation of animals. In Genesis, ix, 7, and Exodus, i, 7, to that of men.

† The Syriac  $\text{רָוַח}$  corresponds in its applications to the Hebrew verb  $\text{שָׂרַץ}$ , being used of generation and fructification. The Samaritan word has the sense of *birth* or *coming forth*, and can bear no other in the passage.

‡ Paræus' *Comment.* in Gen. ch. i, v. 20.



cautiously, and we are on the safest ground. The view here advocated as the right interpretation, is very different from that eternal and unbroken development which is only another name for the darkest atheism. God's personal sovereignty and personal interposition are as directly recognized as in the most distinct exercise of miraculous power, and that not once, or in some far off principium, but in repeated, oft-repeated acts. There was a time, not a million of ages in duration, or twenty-four hours, or twenty-four minutes, but an instant, ἐν ῥιπή τοῦ ὀφθαλμοῦ, "in the twinkling of an eye," when a new thing began to be. There was an exact moment when animal life began—a life which before was not in our earth, and which, but for the Divine Word saying *Let it be*, most assuredly never would have been. The earth, or nature in her largest sense, though any power previously belonging to them, never would have originated, or developed, or brought it into existence. But still it does say, most distinctly, the earth brought them forth, or gave them birth. The prolific waters was the natural bed in which, through the vivifying agency of the Ruah Elohim, or Divine Spirit, originated the first "moving things."

There is, indeed, a change afterwards in the language, and it says immediately "God *created* the great *tanimim*," Hebrew, תַּנִּינִים, rendered the "great whales," but which is a general name for the leviathan class of animals. In respect to this, however, there may be various tenable suppositions. It may mean that some of those huge creatures, now extinct, and whose relics so much astonish us, were special formations, like man in a subsequent period,—so specially formed, perhaps, because

like him they were intended, in their period, to hold an analogous though much inferior species of dominion over the other vegetable and animal tribes. It may denote that this production out of the earth and waters was confined to the fish and reptiles, and lower classes of aquatic birds, whilst the higher terrestrial animals were direct formations. Or as a third supposition, which seems best to agree with the whole spirit of the account, we may take the entire after clause as explanatory of the first, or as indicating that that was the general way in which God created the animal world, namely, through natural agencies, and without intending, by the use of the word *ברא*, to make any distinction between them, or to intimate that one class were any more immediate creations than the others. But let us follow the record — we say again, and it cannot be said too often, whatever it means, and wherever it may lead us. An implicit faith in the Divine Word is more precious than absolute correctness of interpretation. All our light respecting the first origin of things we must get from the written revelation, or remain in total darkness. Science may boast as she pleases, but according to her own most vaunted law, she can only trace the footsteps of a present or once passing causation. When those footsteps cease — as from the very nature, not only of things, but ideas, they must cease, when we come to the question of origin — she can teach us nothing. This *seems* to have been before *that*, she may say; or between this and that there *seem* to have been many mediate stages of transition or development. Such is the *apparent* lesson she reads in the rocks, the mines, the lava, the beds of coral. Some such instruction, too, seems dimly hinted in the *appearances* presented by

comparative anatomy. But how, and whence, came life itself? Whence the primal force from which came forth all these manifestations of outward growth or development. The untaught Esquimaux stand on an equal footing here with La Marek, or La Place, or Auguste Comte. Without light coming from above the plane of physical causation, one is just as ignorant as the other.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

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### WHAT IS MEANT BY GOD'S MAKING THE PLANT BEFORE IT WAS IN THE EARTH.

WHAT WAS FIRST MADE? WAS IT THE TREE OR THE SEED? OR SOMETHING BEFORE THE SEED?—INTERPRETATION OF GENESIS, II, 5.—INTERPRETATION OF HEBREWS, XI, 3.—VULGATE AND SYRIAC VERSIONS.—GREEK COMMENTATORS.—INTERNAL EVIDENCE.—CALVIN.—WHENCE DID PAUL LEARN HIS DOCTRINE OF THE CREATIVE WORD?—COLOSSIANS, I, 16.—WHAT ARE MEANT BY THE UNSEEN THINGS.—SEMINAL POWERS.—PLATO.—GOD THE ARCHITECT OF IDEAS.

IT may be well to consider here the brief recapitulation which we find in Genesis, second chapter, verse 4th. "These are the *generations* of the heavens and the earth *in the day* in which the Lord God made the heavens, and the earth, and every tree of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb before it *grew*— (Hebrew, רָמַדְוּ, LXX, πρὸ τοῦ ἀνατεῖλαι, Vulgate, *prius quam germinavit*.) For God had not rained (Hebrew, *caused* it to rain) upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but a mist\* went up and watered all the face of the earth." This might strike some minds as favoring the idea of immediate or direct creation,—that is, the making of the tree as a tree, or of the very thing which came up out of the earth, before it was in the earth. The first objection to this—with all reverence be it said—is its apparent absurdity—not its marvel-

\* Hebrew, רָמַדְוּ. It occurs only here and Job, xxxvi, 27. The LXX, Vulgate, and Syriac, all render it a *fountain* which went up and watered the whole face of the earth.

lousness, or supernaturalism, but its apparent want of all meaning and consistency. Something else, then, must be meant by his "making the tree before it was in the earth." If we refer it to the seed, we have the same difficulty in kind, if not in degree. The seed itself, as much as the tree, is an outward organization, the apparent product of a living power lying back of it as a *real entity*, per se, and, in fact, better entitled to the seminal name than the material seminal organism, because it is this living power which builds the outward matter of the seed into its peculiar form and structure, thus constituting its *essence*, or making it what it *is*. Besides, if we search for this *previously existing* thing, by going back of the tree to the seed, there is no reason why we should not recede a step farther to the *vitality* that dwells in the seed itself, and which, in the order of nature, as well as in the order of ideas, is anterior to the material organization. If such a door may be opened in the interpretation, or if we depart at all from the ultimate *outward product*, there is not only an exegetical liberty which we may rationally employ, but an imperative consistency that will not permit us to stop short of the vital and immaterial principle.

Even admitting, however, that the brevity of this second account might suggest the idea of an immediate creation of ultimate products—especially if considered by itself—still we say it would not be enough to do away the force of the expressions employed in the fuller and more detailed narrative. A mere silence cannot be placed against an express assertion. A general affirmation of production may be in accordance with another which affirms that this was through any number of medi-

ate causalities. But aside from all such considerations, the general aspect of this short summary, if we view it from the right stand-point, will strike us as in perfect harmony with the letter as well as the spirit of the first and longer statement. It is only another mode of expressing that same great truth, or principle, which it seems to be the chief aim of Scripture to present in all it reveals to us of the work of creation. It is neither more nor less than the essential act of faith, as Paul sets it forth, Hebrews, xi, 3, in which we believe that "the worlds (τοὺς αἰῶνας, the æons or ages) were brought out in order\* by the word of God; so that the things *that are seen* were made (or generated) from things that *do not appear*," (ἐκ μὴ φαινομένων.) That is, the outward or phenomenal entities were generated or born (γεγονέναι) from the invisible, immaterial vital powers, principles, laws, σπερματικὸι λόγοι, spermatie words or ideas, call them what we will, which are themselves the first and immediate creations of the Divine Word going forth before any new agency of nature, whether the universal or any particular nature.

It may be well to dwell here on the fuller exegesis of the passage that has been already several times quoted, and which is referred to in the introduction as containing the key of our whole argument. It will be seen that in our translation of Hebrews, xi, 3, there is a slight departure from the common reading of the Greek text, as well as from the common English rendering. For this the reader is entitled to our reasons. They are of two kinds, outward authority and internal evidence. Under the

\* Greek, *κατηρτίσθαι*. The radical sense of the word is to "adjust, to put together in harmony;" from the primary root *ἄρῳ*, whence *art*, *harmony*, etc.

first head we may cite the exact concurrence of the Latin Vulgate and the old Peschito or Syriac Version. The authors of both these must have read ἐκ μὴ instead of μὴ ἐκ, that is, so as to give the negative to the participle instead of the verb. The Arabic Version follows them in this; but being of a later date, is not, therefore, of so high authority, although still more ancient than any extant Greek manuscripts. We venture to say that the proof drawn from even a large number of these is outweighed by this joint testimony of the two oldest versions of the New Testament. Any number of manuscripts may have been copied one from the other, but it would be exceedingly difficult to explain how both these earliest translations give precisely the same rendering, unless there had been that in the then common reading of the Greek text which fully warranted it. The reader who will take the pains to examine other varying passages in which these two old versions concur, and to observe how uniformly their joint testimony is supported by the internal evidence, will see ample reason for the deference we pay to them as the best proof of a genuine ancient reading. In both the Syriac and the Vulgate, the sense is clear and precisely similar—"So that the things that are seen were made from things that are *unseen*"—*ut ex invisibilibus visibilia fierent*. What adds great weight to this rendering is the fact that it is sustained by the Greek commentators generally, by Erasmus, Grotius, and other distinguished scholars of former centuries, and by Tholuck, Olshausen, Ebrard, and others, of the most modern period. The inward evidence is equally strong. The verse is given as the first illustration of the Apostle's definition of faith. "Faith is the evidence of *things*

*unseen.*” Now, with all reverence be it said, the common rendering of verse third, instead of furnishing the most striking example of this, would be a feeble and pointless negation, such as never is, and never can be, the object of faith. Faith is the evidence, not of what *is not*, but of what *is*. It is the evidence of things unseen, not as nonentities, but as the most substantial of existences. Besides, on the other view, the whole symmetry of the argument is lost; but how beautifully is it presented in the Syriac and Vulgate versions. “Faith is the evidence of things unseen,” for by it “we understand that (in creation) the things that are *seen* came out of or were born of things that are *unseen*. Calvin would get the same meaning from the Greek as it stands in the received text, only connecting ἐκ with the word following so as to read μὴ ἐκφαινομένων. This cannot be supported philologically, although some manuscripts may have the words thus connected, but his rendering, and the reasons he gives for it, show how clearly the sound judgment and logical discernment for which this commentator is distinguished, led him to see what was demanded to make the example in harmony with the definition, and also to feel that the general sense here must be the same with the “*unseen things*,” (τὰ ἀόρατα,) Romans, i, 20, and the μὴ βλεπόμενα, 2 Corinthians, iv, 18. In accordance with this, he translates the passage substantially as it is in the Vulgate and the Syriac,—“*Fide intelligimus aptata esse saecula verbo Dei ut non apparentium spectacula fierent*—“By faith we understand that the ages were adjusted by the Word of God, so that the manifestations (the phenomena) were from things not appearing.”



We have the same distinction, Colossians, i, 16,—“In Him were created all things *visible* and *invisible*,” τὰ ὄρατὰ καὶ τὰ ἀόρατα.) There, as here, by the invisible things are meant not merely objects that are unseen as matters of fact, because they are not before the human eye, or are simply absent from us in time and space, but the things or entities that are in their very nature invisible, incapable of being seen, or becoming the objects of sense; since sight here is put by Paul as well as by Plato for all the senses.\* They are the νοητὰ, or the νοούμενα, to use Paul’s very word, in distinction from the αἰσθητὰ. They are not merely what we would call spiritual things, or truths, but the unseen dynamical entities which are not only the *law*, but the *life* of the phenomenal and

\* No careful reader can avoid being struck with the resemblance between the language of Plato and that of Paul in such passages as 2 Corinthians, iv, 18, Hebrews, xi, 1, 3, Romans, i, 20, Colossians, i, 16. Compare especially the clear contrast presented by Plato in the Republic, 508 C., where he represents God, or the Good, as having the same relation to the ideal world that the sun, or light, bears to the visible, ὅτιπερ αὐτὸ ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς πρὸς τε νοῦν καὶ τὰ νοούμενα τοῦτο τοῦτον ἐν τοῖς ὄρατοῖς πρὸς τε ὄψιν καὶ τὰ ἰζώμενα. Compare, also, 509, D., Phaedo, 79, A, Θῶμεν οὖν βούλει δύο εἶδη τῶν ὄντων, τὸ μὲν ὄρατὸν τὸ δὲ ἀειδές. “Let us distinguish two kinds of being, the visible (or the phenomenal) and the unseen.” Numerous passages of the same kind may be found throughout the dialogues. The Apostle may not have read Plato, much less copied from him; but this Platonic style of speech had become quite common in his age, and must have been familiar in the schools of Tarsus, that third great seat of ancient learning after Athens and Alexandria. It is no impeachment of Paul, or of Paul’s inspiration, that he employed the same truthful language, not only as Plato did, but also to represent invisible entities far higher than were ever dreamed of in his philosophy.

material. All these, whether of higher or lower rank, Paul tells us come from the Eternally Begotten Word, the Πρωτότοκος, or First Born before all creation," Colossians, i, 15. They are ἐν αὐτῷ *in Him*, and δι' αὐτοῦ *through Him*,—that is, as the immaterial law and the outward manifestation—"and in Him all things stand together," συνέστηκε. And then the Apostle proceeds farther, "things in heaven and things on the earth, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers," whether these be dynamical or personal entities, they are all from the same life-giving, law-giving, spirit-quickenings, creative Word. Next he rises still higher to the moral or purely spiritual world, and traces the same relation of the Λόγος, or Word, to the Church. He is the Author of the new spiritual life which the Church is developing in humanity during the new dispensation, or αἰών, or *day*, of Christianity. No one of these applications of the language is any more metaphorical than another. Natural life, psychical or animal life, pneumatical or spiritual life, all come from one originating, generating, animating, and renovating Word.

But where did Paul learn all this? From personal revelation, it might be said, as he himself has more than intimated. And yet we may suppose that this was in connection with the study of the Older Scripture, either as called to mind from the expositions he had learned in the school of Gamaliel, or as it came up still more strongly and vividly to his thought during the period of his contemplative seclusion in Arabia. The germs of these ideas, which are so wondrously expanded in his own mind, he found in such passages as Psalms, xxxiii, 6, Proverbs, viii, 22, and especially in the Mosaic account

of the creation when studied from the higher position to which Paul had attained. In that declaration, "*And God said,*" which precedes every creative act, he found the going forth of the Eternal Word or Logos; and he does not hesitate to hypostatize it as the earlier Jewish interpretations have done; only Paul carries out the idea to other entities about which the Mosaic record is silent. There had been creations older than that of our visible earth and heavens. As the Word went forth, "Let there be light," "Let there be a firmament," "Let the dry land appear," "Let the earth bring forth," "Let us make man," so, also, in some of the still more ancient days had it been said, Let there be Thrones, Let there be Dominions, Let there be "Principalities and Powers in the heavenly places." "For in Him it was pleasing that all fullness should dwell, so that He is the "reconciliation," the "peace," the pervading harmony in the physical, spiritual and moral worlds. "He maketh peace in his high places."

Some would regard the expression, *μη φαινόμενα*, Hebrews, xi, 3, as equivalent to *τὰ μη ὄντα*, and the entire verse as simply meaning that God made all things out of nothing. This is Pearson's view. But the whole aspect of the passage shows that these *unseen*, or *unappearing* things are not spoken of as *nihilities*, for which the proper term would be *τὰ μη ὄντα*, but true and most real existences contrasted with *φαινόμενα*, as being not objects of sense in any actual or possible way, and yet the seminal source of all natural or sensible manifestations, nor merely, on the other hand, naked or abstract truths, but created ideas, types, or powers having their acting and their energy in time. If the *ἀόρατα*, or the

unseen, are only the negations of the *ἰδυτά*, the seen, then the latter are the highest realities, and the whole power of the antithetical climax is destroyed.

To apply all this to our present argument, we would say, with all reverence, that here in the works of the third and fifth days, or in the production of life from the earth, the "unseen things that are understood" are the created ideas or types, the divine seminal powers which are anterior in time, as well as in order of existence, to all natural or outward manifestation. Before the earth could bring forth, or begin to bring forth, the lowest form of vegetation, there must be the Divine Word calling into being those seminal activities, or *principia*, whose presence the old nature is commanded to acknowledge, and by which, henceforth, the new nature, so far as it can be called a new nature, is to be modified. Thus did "God make the herb, the tree," each after its type, or kind, "before it was in the earth." Thus did he *make* it "before it *grew*," or germinated, or had a material seed, or outward seminal organism, or any outward material being whatever, whether in the plant or in the seed. God made the *perfect* plant, it may be truly said, and this, too, not only as a mediate work which would be the fact phenomenally and chronologically, but also as an effect (effectum or thing done) viewed as already existing in the cause.

In a higher and truer sense, however, the making of the formal in distinction from the material cause was the real making, and this the thing made,—that is, the law, idea, or principle in each thing,—that by virtue of which it can be truly called a thing, and which alone can be said to make it what it *is*. In no other way can

the two passages be brought into that perfect harmony which is so evidently intended. *In no other way could it be said, God made the plants before they were in the earth, and yet have this consistent with the idea, so expressly given, of their mediate production through the earth.* Instead of being far fetched and unnecessarily metaphysical, it is the only easy way in which we can form any notion of the process that will not destroy the supernatural on the one hand, or the natural on the other,—throwing all meaning out of a portion of the terms employed, or reducing them to a mere figure of speech, which there is no evidence or intimation that the writer intended to employ.

There was, then, a creation anterior to any natural causality, and this seems to be meant by the declaration that “God had not yet caused it to rain upon the earth, and that there was no man to till the ground.” The birth of these seminal principles was independent of all natural agency. In this sense it was before the fertilizing rain, or the assiduous human culture. However progressive and natural the after-production from the earth, the creation of these seminal types, or principles, was wholly supernatural, immediate, divine. We do not hesitate to use here the sublime expression of Plato, for we regard it as akin to the thought which Paul presents in the Eleventh of Hebrews, “God is the Maker of types (τύπων τεύσεων), He is the architect of ideas;”<sup>\*</sup> but not as barren thoughts or speculative theorems. Along with the law, and constitutive of it, there is the plastic or formative power, the ruling or directing energy. This, there is no absurdity in saying, was put in the

<sup>\*</sup>See Plato, Republic, Lib. x, 597, D.

earth to grow; for it means, that by a new power, then given, the earth was made to bring it *forth* or *out*, that is, give it birth in *outward material form*. This was the *genesis* of the first vegetation. The earth brings it *forth*; and then through the plants' cyclical, seed-bearing law, which is a part of its first creation, continues in existence this ancient germ, until it may please God to change or limit the process, either by direct interposition, or by suffering the nature he had made, both in the plant and in the earth, to exhaust its finite powers.

There is a spiritual reality,—shall we shrink from using the term?—or at least an *immaterial* entity in all, even the lowest, forms of vegetable as well as animal organization. It is a power which no chemistry ever created or can destroy. It is that which, in one sense, may be said to re-appear in every new germination of the plant—the same ἐν ἐν πολλοῖς, or *one in many*, ever living on though its individual manifestations die, and ever repeating itself from the first appearance of the vegetable genera upon the earth, down to the *specific* exhibitions of the same old life that annually bud and bloom around us. Call it law, idea, power, principle, whatever we may, it is a reality, a high reality, the highest reality connected with the material organization; and this it is which God made, before the tree was in the earth, or the herb grew, or rains had fertilized the seed, or the careful hand of man had supplied the conditions of a rich and genial soil.

## CHAPTER XIX.

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### THE CYCLICAL LAW OF ALL NATURES.

TWO CONTRASTED STATES IN ALL NATURES.—EACH HAS ITS MORNING AND ITS EVENING.—NECESSITY FOR THIS.—GROWTH TO A MAXIMUM.—THAT WHOSE LAW OF EXISTENCE IS GROWTH MUST DECLINE.—THE TREE COULD NOT LIVE FOREVER.—WHY?—THE SAME LAW IN THE LARGEST AS IN THE SMALLEST PHYSICAL GROWTHS.—APPLIES TO PLANTS, TO ANIMALS, TO RACES, TO NATIONS, TO AGES OR WORLDS.—HENCE THE NECESSITY OF REPEATED MORNINGS, OR INTERPOSITIONS OF THE SUPERNATURAL.—ILLUSTRATION FROM A PLATONIC MYTH.

BEFORE proceeding to consider the creation of man, it may be well to present certain views which have an equal application to all the periods, and may, therefore, be most properly discussed in a separate chapter. Each of the great creative times, or days, we have regarded as characterized by two divisions, or two opposite and distinctly marked states. In the most comprehensive view we can take of them, one may be called the natural, the other the supernatural, one the night of nature's rest, whether we regard it as a steady ongoing, or as a period of decay and torpor after a preceding growth, the other the morning of God's new working, when the Word again goes forth, and the old slumbering nature is awaked to a higher energy, and made to co-operate in the production of a higher organization, or a higher order of being. It is immaterial in what chronological order we take them, except that if we would maintain the analogy of evening and morning, the evening, or the natural, would come first. This must be the order of every

account that does not commence with the absolute principium, or *principium principiorum*. Thus, we think, the whole creation that is meant to be revealed to us in the Bible commences with a pre-existent nature. There was a nature in the dark chaos, however rudimentary, inchoate, or imperfect it may have been. It may have so existed for a longer or shorter time, although this chaos, or imperfect nature, had its commencement, doubtless, in some supernatural energizing of a still more ancient date. The principium, therefore, of our present mundane creation, commencing thus with an existing natural, the evening is older than the morning, and ever after, throughout the whole series, keeps the chronological precedence. But not to go over ground on which we have already dwelt, it may be sufficient for the present argument to allude briefly to the manner in which those divisions may be characterized by the most direct antithetical features. They are to each other as night and morning, as passivity and activity, as inward development of an imposed law followed by a new energy from without, as a long going on of natural law and then sudden and startling exhibitions of the supernatural.

But these ideas alone do not complete the contrast. The mind is led to think of nature as containing in herself, or as we might better say, in her imperfection, an absolute necessity for such antithetical alternations. Nature, we have seen, can never rise above herself, or get above the law imposed for her working. Hence, if she is ever carried to a higher state, and made to co-operate in the birth of higher products, there is an imperative demand for the new outward supernatural energy. Without the first creative Word, darkness would have



ever rested upon the face of the waters. Without the second, there never would have been a sky, or clouds, or atmosphere. Nature's old power would never have sufficed for such a result. Without the third, the dry land would never have appeared, or the waters been gathered together. Without those that succeeded, the first dawning of vegetable life would never have made its appearance; much less would animal existence have ever awaked from the darkness and death of the antecedent night. But still more than this. Although nature, on the supposition of her being finite, and not God, could never rise above an imposed law, and therefore the doctrine of an eternal progressive development must be false, yet still she could keep up to this law, it might be said, and thus maintain an eternal ongoing in the same plane, and the same direction. In other words, the nature which has once produced vegetation would forever produce it, of the same kind and in the same degree; that which had given birth to animals would go on producing animals to all eternity. There would be no decay in it, no pause, or check, or running down, unless supernaturally retarded, or stopped, by the same power which originated its activity. At least, it might be supposed that when nature, or a nature, had reached what might be called its maximum in any stage, that maximum would be forever thereafter maintained, without any ab-extra aid, and on the supposition of no ab-extra hindrance. Here, therefore, it becomes necessary to enquire — What is the right idea of a physical maximum, or maximum development, and what conceptions are we compelled, by the laws of our thinking, to regard as entering into the statement by which it is set forth? In such analysis it is

found, that we must make one of two suppositions. A maximum implies either an *increasing power*, or an *increasing growth* of the same power. The last may seem to involve a contradiction, and, therefore, to make the meaning clearer, we would say, that in the one case, the degrees of more or less would be in the power itself making it at every stage a greater power than it was before; in the other, they would be predicated of the outward manifestation, which is simply the outward growth, whilst the power, whether hidden or manifested, remains the same. Thus the power is all in the coiled spring; the growth is in the manifestation through which that power is visibly brought out, as we may say, in the increasing or decreasing motions of the machinery which it impels. The first, or an increase in the power itself, would involve the absurdity (absurdity, we mean, when nature alone is concerned) of *something from nothing*. It would violate that cardinal axiom, *e nihilo nihil*, which sceptical naturalists are so fond of when applied, where it has no application, to the supernatural works of God; since in itself, or where nature alone is concerned, *more from less*, (which is implied in an increase of the power,) would involve precisely the same idea, and present the same contradiction to the reason. The second supposition, or that of the maximum of *growth*, has no such difficulty. The *power*, the law, or the nature, as we might better call it, is as perfect in the seed as in the tree, as perfect and as strong in the pressure of the imprisoned fluids, as when they are playing in the full formed jet or fountain. The tree is to the seed the *extent* of its growth, or the state in which it all *comes out*, or in which the hidden power is all revealed in the perfect or finished product.

Now we are compelled to regard this maximum, whose nature we are enquiring into, as being of this latter kind. But here comes in another thought. Could this outward phenomenal growth or manifestation be maintained forever? Could the *power*, which has thus brought itself *out* in the tree, and made the exterior material elements contribute to its manifestation, thus remain *out* eternally, or indefinitely, presenting the same unchanging, undecaying *appearance*? So, perhaps, it might be thought, if there were no opposing influence from without, whether regarded as proceeding from the supernatural, or from some other nature. There appears no reason, it might be said, why the tree, when once it had attained its maximum size and maturity, should not live on forever green, and forever strong. And yet, aside from any conclusion we might derive from experience, there is something in the laws of our own minds, or of our own thinking, which tells us that such could not be the case, that it is impossible, not from incidental circumstances, but, in the very nature of things. There would seem to be a necessity of an opposite process following every such growth to a maximum degree of manifestation. In other words, there is a necessity in the very idea of nature, or a nature, that that which *grows* must *decline*. Whatever can only come to its height by *successive* stages, must decrease by a corresponding but inverse process. That which necessitates the one necessitates the other. What can only be reached *gradually*, can never be retained *permanently*, without the exertion of a greater power than was called out in the attainment. This would be involved in that idea which is so inherent in nature,—the idea of gradual or successive effort,—by which *growth*,

instead of *instantaneous production*, is necessitated as the very law of its existence. Decay is thus the necessary opposite of growth, and yet power is no more lost in the one case than gained in the other. It is only relaxing an effort, the maintaining of which at the maximum tension, would demand a greater strength than was required to reach it, or a greater strength than the nature possesses.

This same law of physical force must prevail in the highest and largest as well as in the smallest and lowest organizations. The growth and decline of a plant, or of a tree, must be governed, in this respect, by the same principle with that of a world, or a system of worlds. It must be the same in the briefest natural cycle, and in one of the great periods of creation. It must be the same, too, not only as regards the individual, but the species, or the genus. Not only will the tree reach its maximum and then exhibit the reverse process, but the species of trees to which it belongs will have a corresponding cycle of growth, maximum, decline. The same analogy carries us on to apply the principle to the general order of being which embraces species as well as individuals. The whole system of vegetable life, must be conceived of as having thus its maximum and minimum state of development, with the intermediate and alternating generations of growth and decline.

But we may advance a step beyond this. The question may come up, — Would the cycle itself be eternal? That is, would it repeat itself so as ever to attain the same maximum, or would there be also a decline here, each highest production being less and lower than that of the preceding revolution, until finally the nature is

exhausted, or falls to a state from which it must be revived by a new energy, or a new infusion of life from the supernatural? The whole course of the analogy we have been considering would certainly tend to this latter conclusion. To sustain itself at the maximum tension would demand a greater force than was required to reach it. The same principle in physics would be equally against the continuance of a maximum cycle among cycles.

The position we have reached is that all natures, lesser natures, greater natures, partial natures, individual natures, specific natures, general natures—the one universal nature—have all one law of growth, maximum, decline, *ortus, transitus, interitus*; and that if one outlives one or more revolutions, it is only to go round in a similar cycle with a corresponding law of decrease at each repetition.

In other words, the cyclical law is the law of all natures, or as we might say, the *nature of all natures*. If we are not satisfied with any attempted a priori proof, there is the inductive or a posteriori argument derived from experience. This may be very limited, but it knows of no exceptions. It is decidedly against the doctrine of any eternal progress severed from the idea of the supernatural. As far as we can judge from “the things that are seen” this is the process of all natures. They all repeat themselves; they all have a tendency to run round and run out. We see it every where in the natural world. We discover it, moreover, in existences of a higher character, which although not strictly belonging to the physical in their essence, have their manifestation in connection with it. We trace it, to some extent, in the

moral world, in social and political systems, in psychological developments, in intellectual and literary periods. These, too, have their growth, maximum, decline. A nation has its birth, youth, manhood and old age. What we call "the age," too, presents often the same manifestations. But in nature strictly, as far as our observation can extend, there are no exceptions—none that are such even in appearance. Some of the periods are but for moments—that is, moments in our modes of estimation—some are for hours, some for days, for seasons, for years, for ages. But in all the same cyclical law reigns predominant. Each has its birth, its youth, its age, its perfection and its imperfection, its growth, its decay, its reviviscence, its winter, its spring—its evening of torpor and repose, its new morning, when like the sun in its circuit it again sets out to run its appointed round as one of the lesser wheels in the Gilgal Toledoth,\* or great wheel of the universal nature.

Unless, therefore, the Scripture expressly contradicts, we cannot resist the conviction that would carry this analogy from the lowest to the highest manifestations in the physical universe. As we go back from solar days to seasons, from seasons to years, from years to life-times of plants and animals, from these to ages that witness the growth and decline of species and genera, we cannot reject the thought that there are still higher *days*, and seasons, and years. God and nature cannot be supposed to stop short with our sense, and our history, and our

\*The name the Jewish Rabbinical writers gave to the wheel of Ezekiel, which they regarded as representative of the whole system of natures.

inductions. The ever widening spiral carries us upward to the ages of ages—the *αιῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*—possessed of the same cyclical character, and during which God employed the same cyclical law in the production of worlds. And Scripture does not forbid it. To one who will read it aright, the whole aspect of the sublime account in Genesis is consistent alone with such a view, while it is greatly aided by those remarkable expressions in other parts of the Bible, where the utmost power of language seems taxed to convey an idea of the vast duration of God's kingdom (His visible, outward dynamical kingdom) in the ages that preceded the growth of our world as well as in those that are to come.

From all this we infer not only the *fact*, but the absolute *necessity* of repeated creative or supernatural acts; and this, not only to raise nature from time to time to a higher degree, but to arouse and rescue her from that apparent death, into which, when left to herself, she must ever fall. The supernatural becomes the originator of a new nature, or the restorer and vivifier of an old; but this, too, in time runs out, or tends to run out. There comes again the evening, the winter, the period of growing torpor, from which a new creative word alone can recall the dying cycle, and hence the necessity of such word, not only to the higher progress, but to the very existence of the universe.

So, also, in the moral world. Here, too, we trace a similar analogy, if not the same law. In the moral as well as in the physical kingdom there is the *extraordinary* manifestation, the new life, the powerful growth, the apparent decay, and then the long reign of ordinary *moral causes*, until, when the spiritual seems almost sunk in the

natural, God comes forth from the "hiding place of his power," and there is a new exhibition of the supernatural word and supernatural grace reviving every thing from its night of torpor and decay. It is something more than a metaphor when such reviviscences are styled a *morning*, and the period they usher in a day,—a day of light, a day of life, a day of power, a day of the right hand of the Most High, such days as we may yet expect are coming upon the Church and the world.

But confining our attention to the physical universe, we see in the views presented in this chapter a higher reason than was before assigned for the terms evening and morning, day and night. Not merely is each period considered in its comparative imperfection an evening to the more perfect that follows, but there is, in a still more marked sense, in each period, *considered in itself*, an evening and a morning,—a time of growth and a time of decline, a time of energy and a time of torpor, when nature requires a higher power to wake her from her commencing slumbers. For facts in confirmation, we might appeal to geology herself, if we cared at all about bringing her into the argument. The rocks furnish no obscure evidence that the anterior productions of nature were actually in a course of degeneracy, and tending to go out, when the higher order began to be superinduced.

There is in the human mind a strong disposition to regard nature and her manifestations under this idea of greater and lesser cycles. It came, perhaps, in some degree from astronomical observations, but may also have been aided by some traditional belief in successive creative periods. Among the ancient speculations on this head, there is one which is so remarkable that we would



wish to dwell upon it at some length. We refer to that strange myth of Plato in the *Politicus*, which we have given in another work, but find it so germane to our present argument that we cannot refrain from introducing it in this connection. The leading idea, it will be seen, is the one on which we have so much dwelt—the cyclical alternation of the natural and the supernatural. There is much extravagance in its imagery, much that is inconsistent, much that cannot be reconciled with any rational view; but this thought is throughout predominant,—When God suffers nature to take her course, all things tend to disorder, decay, and dissolution, when He resumes the helm, nature moves on in her law of progress, order comes again from disorder, growth from decay, and youth from age.

“At one time,” says the myth,\* “God himself guides this universe and turns it round. Again he abandons it to itself when the *periods* of its destined time (αἱ περιόδους τοῦ προσήκοντος χρόνου) have received their complement. Then it commences to move in a contrary direction, and this tendency arises from an innate necessity of its nature. For to be unchangeable, (that is, ever to retain a maximum,) pertains alone to things divine; but the nature of matter has no share in this dignity. What we name, therefore, the Heavens and the *Kosmos*, although partaking of many blessed qualities from him who generated it, still has communion with matter, and, on this account, cannot be exempt from change. It is in this way that it gets this property of unrolling or rolling back, consisting at first in the slightest conceivable change or parallax of its previous motion. Now, for

\* Plato, *Politicus*, 269 C.

God to act in a changeable manner, or to turn things at one time in this direction, and then again in the contrary, is impossible, (ὡς θεῖμυς, is *morally* impossible.) And, therefore, for these reasons must we say that the world neither turns itself, nor that it is forever turned by God in contrary circuits. Neither must we suppose that two Gods with opposing purposes conduct its revolutions, but as has been said, (and which in fact is the only supposition left,) that at one time it is guided by a divine cause, during which *period* it receives again the acquired power of life, and an immortality not innate but imparted by the Demiurgus; and then, again, that it goes by itself, being left to itself so long that even many ten thousand years may be occupied in its revolutions."

The myth then proceeds to describe the alternate cycles or semi-cycles. The first, or that which is under the direct care of the Deity, is the period of production, and, in general, the order of all things is from death to life. It goes on for an immense duration, but at last comes to an end. When the complement of the times is filled up, and the change must take place, then, it is said, "*The Divine Pilot letting go the helm, retires to His secret place of observation, and destiny and innate tendency* (ξύμφοτος ἐπιθυμία) are left to turn back the revolutions of the world. Then commences the reign of evil. Nature through all her works gives signs of woe. First a strange tremor is felt in every part of the abandoned world. After a while, however, to employ Plato's imagery, the vessel ceases from the tumultuous surging which at first ensues, and, enjoying a calm, gets at length into the other movement. This, although one of law, derived from the still felt influence of the former period,

is notwithstanding a course of steady and constant degeneracy. Deteriorations everywhere take place, first of the vegetable, next of the animal, and finally of the human race, until here and there a small and wretched remnant alone survive. The old harmony,\* the remembrance of which had not before been entirely lost, is now utterly extinct. The former laws of nature are at length all reversed; until finally, when the kosmos is on the very verge of utter ruin, "God, beholding it in great extremity and being concerned lest by being overwhelmed in disorder and utterly dissolved, it should plunge again into the limitless, formless region of dissimilitude, or chaos, (εἰς τὸν τῆς ἀνομοιότητος ἀπειρον ὄντα τόπον δύη,) once more seats himself at the helm, and, having arrested it in its course to ruin, arranges it again in order, rectifies it, and thus renders it immortal." *Plato, Politicus*, 273 D. It requires no very vivid imagination to see in Plato's "formless region of dissimilitude" a striking picture of the idea presented in the Hebrew tohu and bohu, and in his anacyclical revolutions something like the natural and supernatural times we have regarded as shadowed forth in the evening and morning of the Mosaic account. Not that Plato meant that God ever wholly abandoned nature, but that there are seasons in which He is more especially present, or which may be called the *extra ordinary*, and that, too, in the moral as well as in the natural world.

\* By the old harmony, Plato means the old *types*, or ideas, which had not become wholly obliterated, though greatly marred and corrupted, in the universal degeneracy. They are what he elsewhere calls the *spermatie words* or *reasons*, which, by being deeply implanted in nature, preserve some order in the kosmos long after the direct Divine care, or supernatural impulse had been withdrawn.

## CHAPTER XX.

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### WORK OF THE SIXTH DAY. CREATION OF MAN.

MAN A SPECIAL CREATION.—NOT CREATED AS A RACE.—DESCENT FROM A PAIR.—THE EXPRESSION “FROM THE DUST OF THE EARTH.”—THE TRUE HUMAN BEGINNING DATES FROM THE SPIRITUAL ORIGIN.—THE PRIMUS HOMO.—THE *Nepesh Hayya*, OR BREATH OF LIFE.—THE TERM IS USED OF ANIMALS AS WELL AS OF MAN.—BUT IS APPLIED TO MAN IN A HIGHER AND PECULIAR SENSE.—*Hayyim*, THE WORD FOR LIFE, IS PLURAL.—WHY?—ANIMATION OF THE ANIMALS IS FROM THE EARTH AND RETURNS TO THE EARTH.—VIRGIL.—ECCLESIASTES, III, 21.—THE DIVINE IMAGE.—GROUND OF THE HUMAN DIGNITY AND IMMORTALITY.—THE OLD WORD COVENANT.—LIFE AN INHERITANCE.—SALVATION A RESTORATION OR REDEMPTION.

IN what has been previously said of the growth of plants, and even of animals, from the earth, it has probably suggested itself to the reader's mind that the writer is on dangerous ground, or, at all events, pursuing a train of argument and interpretation which, if not well guarded, may lead to some most unwelcome conclusions. Carry out the view, it may be said, and we may make man also a product of natural law,—divinely vivified it may be, but still, in some way, a development, a growth out of the earth or elements, as much as the lately made *acari* of Mr. Cross, if indeed there is any such order in the entomological world. But here again we say,—keep to the only knowledge of the matter, or only means of knowledge we have or ever can have. Keep to the record God has given us. Had this taught us plainly in respect to man, as we think it has in respect to the plants, and at least some of the inferior animals, that his body, or even his sentient *animal life* had been a natural growth developed from preceding organisms, by a supernatural quicken-

ing indeed, yet acting *upon* and *through* a former nature, we should have had no difficulty in believing it. No philosophy or science could convict it of irrationality; no other revealed doctrine of faith or morals would be weakened by the supposition of such an origin. For all that we know, God could have made in this manner as perfect a *primus homo* to stand at the head of our race, as by any direct or instantaneously miraculous procedure. To such a supposition, too, if confirmed from other sources of argument, or other evidence of interpretation, we should find nothing repugnant in the words *עָשָׂה* and *בָּרָא*, (he *made* or he *created*,) as we have previously explained them. They are only general modes of expressing the fact of the divine production, whether such production be direct or through media. This is shown by the fact that they are both used when other declarations in the context leave no doubt of mediate or natural agencies, as we have defined the word nature.

In one respect there is a striking difference between the account of the human and that of the vegetable and animal creations. The two latter are spoken of generically as races, without the least reference to any individual progenitor or progenitors. In what is told us of the human origin, there is a contrast so marked that we can not resist the conviction of its having been specially intended. Whatever be the mode of production, there is no doubt in respect to the result or thing produced. It is distinctly said that God made, not *men*, not a *race* or races, but two individuals. He made them "*in his own image*," and this remarkable expression, whatever be its depth of meaning, makes an ineffaceable distinction between the human and all lower species upon the

earth. From the word אָדָם (Adam) alone, we could not have determined with certainty that the account was not generic. But the particulars which are given respecting the female, her origin and established relation to the man, stamp upon the narrative a character of individuality which is unmistakable. The entire departure here from the language used in respect to other races puts the meaning beyond all doubt. If any fact in creation is clearly revealed, if there is any one placed beyond all cavil, beyond all room for any honest difference of interpretation, it is that the origin of the present human race was from one single pair,

In this part, then, of our argument, all that we need contend for is that the origin of man, as *man*, was special and peculiar. By this we mean, his distinctive humanity, as separate from all that he has in common with the lower natures. We are not much concerned about the mode of production of his material or merely physical organization. In regard to this there is nothing in the expressions "He made," or "He created him," or "He made him from the earth," which is at war with the idea of growth, or development, during either a longer or shorter period. Ages might have been employed in bringing that material nature, through all the lower stages, up to the necessary degree of perfection for the higher use that was afterwards to be made of it. We do not say that the Bible teaches this; we do not think that any one would be warranted in putting any such interpretation upon it. There is, however, in itself, and aside from any question of interpretation, nothing monstrous or incredible in the idea that what had formerly been the residence of an irrational and groveling tenant might now be selected

as the abode of a higher life, might be fitted up in a manner corresponding to its new dignity, might be made to assume an erect heavenward position, whilst it takes on that beauty of face and form which would become the new intelligence, and, indeed, be one of its necessary results. The glorified body of Christ, which is now in the highest heaven, is linked in its origin with our frail, physical, material, humanity. He took our nature into himself. The moral and theological bearings of the two cases may be widely different, and yet the physical connection involved in the latter is not less wonderful, to say the least, than any that might be imagined to exist in the former case. A former physical growth might thus have been taken up into a new life. From an old organism there might thus have been made a *new man*. On this head, however, the Bible gives us no distinct information. We can merely say, it *seems* to imply an immediate formation, even of the material nature, as though man were altogether a new thing wholly severed from all physical connection with any previous states of being; still the language is not inconsistent with the other supposition. In fact the mention of earth as the material from which the body was made (עֲרֵץ הָאֲדָמָה, ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς) would appear to intimate some use of a previous nature, together with the laws, the growths, the affinities, the established ongoings, of such previous nature. Such a making from material, whatever it might be, would either be a making according to the laws of that material, and then it would be a nature, a growth; or it would pay no respect to those laws, and then it would be utterly impossible to discover any reason or meaning in the process. It is a war of ideas. It

would seem like using *means* which are not *media*, causes which have no effects, powers which have no energy, material which is not material in any intelligible sense, (especially when predicated of the divine acts,) but a *caput mortuum* whose connection with the resulting product, if it can be said to have any connection, is altogether arbitrary, magical, idealess.

And yet, be this growth or physical origin whatever it may, be its mode ever so much controlled by the laws of an antecedent nature, be its duration longer or shorter, it does not at all necessitate the conclusion which some pious minds would so much dread. It does not make *man himself* a growth, a development. Humanity proper, or the human proprium, did not *grow*, was no work of nature, but had a divine, a supernatural, an instantaneous beginning. There was a time, a moment, when man,—a man—the *primus homo*, began to *be*, who a moment before *was not*. There was one in whom humanity commenced, and from whom all subsequent humanity has been derived. There was one who first began to be a man, and this principium has its date from the first energizing of that higher life which came from a direct inbreathing of the Almighty and Everlasting Father of Spirits.

There is no estimating dates and intervals here. If the whole spirit of the creative history produces the impression, as we think it does, of vast and reciprocally distant events presented on one canvas, or one outline picture vividly limbed by a few graphic words, then, if there were no other objections, might we reasonably regard this part of the account as being in analogy with all the rest. The life by which the physical structure became



distinctively man may have been coeval with the first mere animation of the physical frame, or it might have been the result of a special and long posterior inspiration; and this might have been "*the becoming a living soul*" in that higher sense which would seem to be demanded to make out the necessary distinction between man and the animals, and in order to be in harmony with the more spiritual applications of the word *life* in other parts of the Old and New Testaments.

Such might be our reasoning if we had no more in the Scriptural account of the human origin than is presented in the words and expressions on which we have been commenting. The declarations, "*He created,*" "*He made,*" "*He formed from the earth,*" might, as we have seen, be interpreted in perfect consistency with a long as well as a short, a mediate as well as an immediate process, an instantaneous production as well as a slow natural growth through the operation of natural law. The chart has no dates, the picture has no shading from which we can make any estimate of intervening distances. But there is another part of the account which is not easy to reconcile with such an idea. We refer again to the creation of woman. The whole language here seems to necessitate the idea, not only of a supernatural spirituality, but of a sudden and preternatural formation of the material organism. If we are shut up to this view, then was man widely distinguished from the brute creations in the origin of his lower as well as in that of his higher being. Still, however formed, there is a deep significance in the phrase, "*from the dust of the earth.*" High as may be our celestial parentage, we have an earthly mother. The most touching appellations in all

languages are expressive of the idea. Man "is of the earth earthy." He is *Adam*, he is *homo*, *humus*, *humilis*. If he has a spiritual life that connects him with the higher worlds, he has also an animal, and even a vegetable life, that links him with all below.

Be it, then, when it may and how it may, it is the inspiration of the higher rational life that is the true *beginning* of our distinctive humanity. God breathed into man and he became a living soul. But here, too, the difference will not be made out from single words or phrases. It is a result of the combined force of the whole context, and of the emphasis it compels us to lay on certain parts. "Man," says the Scripture, "*became a living soul*," (נִפְשָׁה חַיָּה.) But the animals, also, are styled *nephesh hayya*, *breath of life*, or *soul of life*, or *living soul*. It is the general term for *animation*, like the Greek ψυχή, ἔμψυχος, including all beyond matter, all the immaterial region, whether we call it *life*, *sense*, *feeling*, *thought*, or *intellect*, extending from the lowest sentient to the highest rational, and taking in all that is denoted by the Hebrew נִפְשָׁה, whose ancient plural form in all the oriental tongues could only have arisen from some early conception of higher and lower degrees as essentially belonging to this great idea or mystery of life. As far, then, as this phrase (*nephesh hayya*) is concerned, we could predicate of man no superiority of origin or of psychological rank above the beast. Every thing depends upon the view we take of the different source *from* which, or different way *in* which the human ψυχή, or *nephesh hayya*, came. In the Hebrew account, the emphasis is not on the word for life, but on the manner of origination. "And God breathed into him the

*nephesh hayya* and man became,"—that is, thus "man became a living soul," and, of course, a higher soul in proportion to the more specially divine and higher source from whence it came. The animation of the other *living creatures* was from the earth, and through the earth, by the common vivification of the Spirit in nature, the Ruah Elohim mentioned in Genesis, i, 2,—the brooding, cherishing, (נִרְמָזָה, *incubans fovens*,) life-giving, life-sustaining spirit, which is the genial source of all physical animation, as we learn also from other parts of the Old Testament. Thus, Psalms, civ. 30, "Thou sendest forth (חֲשִׁיבֵהוּ), Thou diffusest *thy* spirit; they are created; Thou dost gather in (רָכַז) *their* spirit; they expire and return to their dust." In this way the life of nature is originated and sustained; or, as the Psalmist says in this same passage,— "*Thou renewest* the face of the earth." Animation is a flood or stream going forth from the earth and returning back to it. It constantly ebbs and flows under that same influence that first commenced the mighty movement; yet still it is *nature*, (*natura*,) a *being born* and an ever *being about to be born*. It is no profanity to accommodate to this the words of the Latin poet, seeing that his thought is but the echo of this primeval revelation, and if we except man from it, may be regarded as almost a paraphrase of the language of Genesis and the Psalmist,—

Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus  
 Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.  
 Inde hominum *pecudumque genus*, vitaeque *volantum*,  
 Et quae marmoreo fert *monstra* sub aequore pontus.

Virg. *Æn.* vi, 726.

This has indeed a pantheistic tinge, but only from its seeming to recognize no other principle than the anima

mundi, a fault into which all apparent theism must ever run that does not acknowledge, in some way, a plurality in the divine existence.

In such a view of the life of animals we have no hesitation in saying, that when they die, not only their bodily organization but their spirit, their animating *force*, appetite, and sentiency, all, in short, that is included in their *nephesh hayya*, returns again to the earth *from* which, and *through* which, as we have seen, and shown from Scripture, it was primevally *born* or had its seminal principium when God said, "Let the earth and the waters bring forth." In other words, it is *gathered in*,\* as the Hebrew verb of the Psalmist expresses it, or goes back to mingle with that general life of nature of which it is but a *specific* manifestation instead of being, in itself, a divinely constituted personality. Thus, the musing Hebrew philosopher in Ecclesiastes, iii, 21,—“Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward, to the earth?” He clearly intimates the tradition of his day, and does by no means deny the distinction itself, as some have maintained. This he admits as a received and indisputable truth, as one of the settled things which no man called in question, or could think of calling in question. He merely discourages speculation about it; he seems to doubt the power of the human intelligence to trace the

\* The same word is used in respect to the departure of the human soul; but the attentive reader of the Scriptures cannot fail to note the striking difference in the context. Man dies and is “gathered to his fathers,” or “the congregation of the fathers.” The peculiarity of the language must have been intended to guard against this very thought which might otherwise confound him with the lower animal natures.

philosophy, or to give the rationale of the wondrous fact. The animal returns, both body and spirit, to the earth; or rather his body to the earth, his life or spirit, to nature. He has no express divine image, no special divine inbreathing to raise him above the flow of nature, or exempt him from the operation of that cyclical, ever reproducing, reabsorbing law which God has made the peculiar characteristic of the physical world. The spirit of man, on the other hand, returns to Him who breathed it, not to be absorbed, for that would expressly contradict other parts of the Scriptures, but to have its new spiritual destiny determined by the "deeds done in the body."

We would not, however, stop here. The distinction between man and the lower animal creation is too important to be allowed to rest on any merely psychological differences, be they of the most transcendental order. Reason, conscience, the religious sentiment, do certainly constitute a vast superiority. They furnish the ground of a very powerful argument that a being so much above nature must survive nature, that that which can know the eternal, or, in other words, feed on immortal truth, must be itself immortal, or that one whom God has so made he must have destined for immortality. There is a like powerful argument from his hopes, his intuitions, his ever upward and onward aspirations. The bird whose structure and instincts show that he is adapted to another and a warmer clime, we do not hesitate to say, will migrate to that better clime, will yet live in that better clime. So man will dwell in another *world*; he will belong to another *age*; all his moral and even intellectual wants point to another sphere of existence. The argument is even more conclusive for the spiritualist

than the naturalist. And so we may say of all the arguments that we have here mentioned. They are all strong, very strong, but do not furnish that absolute ground which faith demands. By these higher faculties, it may be argued, we are allied to the unseen, and to that which is in its very essence eternal. By being capable of knowing the true, the beautiful, the right, our souls are in union with the everlasting ideas, and so with the mind of God himself. The argument, we say, is a strong argument, a great and glorious argument; we are very far from underrating its preciousness; but we can not feel it to be a perfect demonstration. It may be said to be strong in itself, or for some higher intellect, but our hold upon it is feeble, and often wholly relaxed under the influence of sense and animality. We need something else on which to rest the true view of the human dignity, or a firm and constant belief in the exceeding preciousness of the human existence. This, we think, the Bible furnishes in the very account of man's creation, and especially in the narrative of subsequent transactions between the new created being and his condescending Creator. What the highest psychological view fails to give us is found in that old word, which although once so prominent and so significant, has almost every where dropped out of our modern theology. It is the word "covenant," בְּרִית, *δυσθήκη*, *fædus*, *promissum*,—the word that occurs so often in the Bible, and which the inspired writers are so fond of employing to denote the highest, as well as the most intimate, relation between God and the human race. He created man; he breathed into him the *breath of life*; more than this, or in a sense higher than the term would bear when applied to the

animals, he made this inspiration or inbreathing to be the medium of endowment with moral, rational, and religious faculties; still more than this,—over all, and above all, he made a *covenant* with him. The word is not in the first of Genesis, but its spirit is there, and the term itself is most expressly predicated of the transaction when referred to in other parts of the Old Testament. He placed him on a higher ground than that of natural law, or natural right deduced by the reason from man's relation to the universe, or what might be called, in its highest sense, the universal nature of things. He enters into an agreement, a *covenant*, with this "frail child of dust," and thus gives him a legal, a *forensic* right,—makes him a son, "an *heir* of glory." By the very act of such a covenant he brings him nigher to himself; he elevates him for that purpose to a platform on which the finite and infinite intelligence may converse together, and be, for the occasion, parties in the same voluntary spiritual transaction. He thus places him above nature, not merely in his psychological constitution, but in his objective relation to the divine. Here, then, is the crowning distinction between man and the physical world in all its grades of existence. True it is, that in the Bible, even natural law is sometimes called a covenant, as in Jeremiah, xxxiii, 20, 25, where we have the expression "my covenant of the day and of the night," used as synonymous with the ordinances or physical laws of the heavens; but in such cases the language is evidently figurative, and derived by way of analogy from the higher idea. With man it is a real *covenant*. When applied to the human race, or to any elect family of the race, it is taken in its most direct and literal sense. The transaction belongs

to a higher world of thought and being. It brings in a higher class of ideas. In nature and natural relations there are forces, gravities, attractions, affinities, and, as we approach its department of life and sentiency, appetites, instincts, susceptibilities; in the covenant there are parties, promises, agreements, oaths, conditions, imperatives, fulfilments, forfeitures, penalties, and rewards. It is the glory of the human soul, that unlike the animal, it can be in this forensic or covenant relation to the universal law-giver. Deity binds himself to give his creature life and immortality. He makes the loss of them, or the deterioration of them, to depend, not on any physical law, (except we regard such physical law as the appointed executioner of the positive legal sentence,) but upon the moral forfeiture of the condition through the observance of which there was to be secured eternal life.

It is thus in this subsequent transaction in Eden we find the true ground of our surest belief in the human dignity and immortality. In the words of our noblest catechism, confirmed by the spirit and letter of Holy Writ, "God made a covenant of life with Adam, the first man, both for himself and all his posterity, on condition of obedience;" and when that was broken a similar mode is pursued for the human restoration. A new and better covenant is entered into with the New Man who represents the new humanity. It is this which gives significance and vividness to the whole language employed respecting human salvation. The idea of covenant appears throughout. Everything is federative and forensic. The *recovery* of the soul is its redemption. Salvation is *heirship*; *justification* or *righteousness* is a *title* to an *inheritance purchased* and paid for by the *covenanting*



*head.* But we would not farther pursue the train of thought in this connection. It has been dwelt upon because of the strong tendency among modern theological writers, even when they style themselves evangelical, to place the relations between God and man on the general basis of "the nature of things," and to determine the human place therein as made out by reason and philosophy in distinction from, if not in opposition to, that *express* revelation which constitutes the covenant idea. When carefully analyzed, the former process will be found to be a tracing of man's obligation to the universe, rather than to God the sovereign law-giver of the universe. Covenant was a famous word among the theologians of past centuries. We would venture to say that the Church must return to it, or all that is peculiar in revelation and Christianity will be merged in a lifeless, unscriptural system of natural theology, or some still colder system of natural ethics.

We have the more confidence in this, because it is the very argument that Christ urged against the *naturalizing* Sadducees. He confutes them not with psychological or metaphysical reasonings, but with arguments drawn from the Scripture, from its historical facts showing God's *method* of dealing with men, or the true grounds of the human dignity and immortality. "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have ye never read in the book of Moses, how God said to him—I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob: He is not the God of the dead, but of the living." All here is placed on the ground of covenant. He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. He does not deal thus with the inanimate or merely animal

existences. With them, all is nature and natural law. They are assigned to this department and can never transcend it. With man, on the other hand, all is by virtue of the covenant, whether regarded as made with the universal head of the race, or the federal progenitor of any particular seed whether natural or spiritual. His dignity, his immortality, his rights, his forfeitures, his condemnation, as well as his salvation, are all placed on this ground, and have all their strength and significance from this higher relation.

## CHAPTER XXI.

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### THE SEVENTH DAY. ARGUMENT FROM THE SABBATH.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE SABBATH IN THE EVENING.—DOES IT STILL CONTINUE?  
THE LESS A TYPE OF THE GREATER.—THE SOLAR A TYPE OF THE ÆONIC OR  
OLAMIC PERIOD.—OBJECTION STATED.—JEWISH HEBDOMADS.—WEEKLY, SEP-  
TENNIAL, PENTECOSTAL.—DAVID PAREUS.—AUGUSTINE.—PATRISTIC IDEA OF  
THE SEVEN AGES OF THE WORLD.—WE ARE IN THE SABBATH EVE OF THE  
WORLD.—THE SABBATH MORNING THE LATTER DAY GLORY OF THE CHURCH.  
OBJECTION FROM THE LANGUAGE OF THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT,—ANSWER  
TO IT.

THE most plausible objection to the view we have taken of the indefinite periods is derived from the mention of the Sabbath. Man was created at the close of the sixth day, just before, or at, the evening which was the true commencement of the Sabbath. If we reckon steadily and consistently from the beginning, such must be the result of our computation. The first day commenced in the night or evening; such, therefore, must have been the beginning of all the rest. And this is the reason why the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Samaritan versions have it that God *finished* his work on the sixth day, instead of the seventh, as it is in the Hebrew and the Vulgate. They mean the same thing, or would present the same date under a different view of its relative position.

The human race, then, commenced its being with the Sabbath of the world. It was the closing act in the great series. Creation was finished, and God ceased, or

rested, from his work. This ceasing from creation was the beginning of that Sabbath,—the Sabbath of God. Did it terminate at the end of twenty-four hours, or is it yet continuing? This is the great question.

The argument on the other side runs thus: If the seventh was a natural day of twenty-four hours, so must have been the six preceding: but that the seventh must have been a natural solar day of twenty-four hours, we know from its being the beginning and the rule of reckoning for our current Sabbaths appointed in memory of its divine observance. We have stated the argument in its strongest and most plausible form. The fallacy is in the second clause. It has been well presented by Hugh Miller, in his "Footsteps of the Creator," but we will endeavor to give it in the form in which it comes with most force to our own mind. If the Sabbath was a natural solar day, so were all the rest. This is clear enough,—but may we not invert the argument? God rested on the seventh day. Have we heard of his resuming his labors?—we mean in the work of creation; for in his works of providence "He hath worked hitherto, and yet worketh." These acts do not break the Sabbath any more than man's works of mercy and duty are a violation of the typical hebdomadal rest. Was then this Sabbath—God's Sabbath, we mean,—the Sabbath, or rest, from creation,—twenty-four hours long? Did it have—has it had—its evening and its morning, as we are told of the others? Did Deity resume His work on the eighth day? *was it not a natural day?*

These questions seem to us to have pertinency, and to come directly out from the whole analogy of the account. God rested on the seventh day. So far we interpret

Scripture alike. Has that rest or Sabbath of the Lord yet ceased? If not, then we turn the argument directly round. The seventh was, or rather is, a long, indefinite or unmeasured period, and, therefore, of the same kind were all the rest. We are aware how very much depends on the prepossessions and aspects under which we view the position. Some may not understand the statement; others may see no force in it, or may regard the question as entirely irrelevant, but to one who looks from a different stand-point there is not only no inconsistency, but a great and glorious beauty, a beauty worthy of the Scriptures, and of the great plan upon which all its dispensations are revealed to us, in the less being thus made a memorial of the greater—the weekly Sabbath made by the sun thus symbolizing and ever calling to mind the great Sabbath, the great rest of God, which, as far as respects the physical world, yet continues. The physical creation yet rests; although we may soberly entertain the thought, that in the work of redemption there may have been a new *day of the Lord* to be reckoned in the *greater calendar*, and a change of Sabbath corresponding to it in the reduced scale of our solar diurnal periods,—just as the great degrees of latitude and longitude have their representatives in the divisions of the chart, or the great orbits of the heavens their exact ratios in the circles and angles of the orrery.

Such a representation of the greater by the less may be regarded as not obscurely shadowed forth in the ascending scales of the Jewish Sabbaths—the seventh solar day—the seventh week of the pentecostal cycle—the seventh or sabbatical year,—the seventh septenary of years,—until we come to the great rest of the jubilee.

The cyclical repetitions stop here in the human scale of revelation, for language is finite, and the humanceptive powers grow weary; but surely the thought is something more than a capricious fancy, that these few terms, so regularly enlarging as they ascend, may suggest a higher series of still vaster expansion. Having mounted through the trinal grade, the mind finds a difficulty in abruptly stopping with the earthly jubilee. The less will bring in the thought of the greater. The sabbatical day, the sabbatical year, the sabbatical jubilee, are images of things in the heavens; their shadows are thrown back upon the past, and forward upon the future; they typify the great years of God's existence, the septenaries of ages and aeons, those ever enlarging cycles that we may soberly regard as the measures—not of eternity absolutely, which is immeasurable,—but of those higher workings and intermissions which belong to God's highest government in time and space.

We are fond of consulting, on this and kindred questions, the writings of the older commentators, who lived before any of the discoveries of modern science. What makes some of these works the most important helps in a philological point of view, giving them a value in this respect surpassing that of our most lauded modern criticism, is the fact to which we have before adverted. They never overlook anything in the text. This carefulness results from their greater faith. It comes from their unwavering belief that there is meaning, important meaning, in every jot and tittle of the Divine Word. Hence they see more than many modern commentators, not only in the affirmations, but in the silence of Scripture. We have already alluded to this in the case of

Augustine. His attention is arrested by the remarkable omissions, as well as by the remarkable declarations of the Bible narrative. Thus, for example, in each of the first six days, there is a steady and similarly repeated mention of an evening and a morning as constituting the important elements of each period. In the account of the seventh, all this is strangely omitted. Its invariable repetition in the preceding days is inconsistent with the supposition that the omission was accidental; and the whole style of the narrative forbids the idea that it was for the sake of any epitomal conciseness. It must have been thought of, and designed by, the writer. Now many a modern commentator passes this all over without a remark. But how different the course of this ancient father? Not only does he find a rich meaning in every word and phrase, but he also devotes a chapter to an enquiry into the reason of this strange break in the previous order of the wonderful narrative. In such attempts there are, it is true, many things which are not entitled to consideration, but there is also, oftentimes, a profoundness of meaning, which, although it might not have been thought of by us, carries with it, when presented, an impress of the soundest rationality. Similar examples may be found among commentators who followed after the reformation, and who have exhibited much of this trait of the patristic style. Among others we might refer to David Pareus, an old German divine of the sixteenth century, whose commentary on Genesis we have found it interesting and instructive to consult. In his remarks on this part of the first chapter, he states the question that had been raised by Augustine, why nothing is said of the evening and morning of the seventh as well as of the other days,—

“De septimo die quaeritur an fuerit a Deo creatus, et cur nihil dicatur de ejus vespera et mane ut in diebus aliis.” The first of these questions he answers with a metaphysical reason. It was created *in its causes*, he says—*Fuit creatus in suis causis, hoc est, in motu coeli et solis, die quarto.* The other is more difficult. The mornings and evenings of the first three days, he maintains, must have been made by a miraculous expansion and contraction of the light, those of the three following, by the rising and setting of the sun. But still there must be some reason why there is no mention of a morning and evening to this seventh day; especially since, in other respects, there is given of it so striking and distinct an account. The only conclusion he can come to is this. As this first Sabbath was the peculiar Sabbath of God and angels, it is kept open, as it were, for the saints, so that what is now begun here will then be finished when we attain to the eternal rest from sin,—*Septimus dies est Sabbathum proprium dei angelorum et sanctorum in coelis; quod in nobis esse nunc inchoatur, tandem vero perficietur, quando perpetuam a peccatis requiem agemus. Parei Comment. in Genesin, Ch. ii, v. 2.*

There is a metaphysical aspect to the reason assigned. It would seem to regard this first or divine Sabbath as not coming strictly under the category of time, at least in its ordinary measurements, but as belonging, somehow, to a higher sphere, from whence it has its temporal representative projected upon the scale of our lower plane in time and space. We attach value to it only as showing how a deep and devout thinker, having no other motive than a desire to discover the internal consistency of Scripture, and influenced by no ab-extra considerations,



would be led, from the very text, to regard this seventh day, and of course, all the rest, as having an anomalous character, not to be judged by ideas derived from a subsequent regulated condition of things.

The same inference may be drawn from the speculation among some of the Fathers respecting the seven days of creation, as representative of the supposed seven ages of the world. It may be found set forth in Augustine's Treatise De Genesi Contra Manichaeos, Lib. I, Ch. xxiii, — *Video enim per totum textum divinarum Scripturarum sex quasdam aetates operosas certis quasi limitibus suis esse distinctas ut in septima speretur requies; et easdem sex aetates habere similitudinem istorum sex dierum in quibus ea facta sunt, quae Deum fecisse Scriptura commemorat. Primordia enim generis humani, in quibus ista luce frui coepit, bene comparantur primo diei quo fecit Deus lucem.\** The first mundane age extends from Adam to Noah, over which comes the night of the deluge, quasi vespera hujus diei. The second age has for its evening the confusion of tongues. The dawn of the third is the calling of Abraham, and the *separation* of him from his people; and so on. Such a division may be regarded as all fancy. We attach importance only to the mode of thinking and interpretation from which it comes. It matters not, too, whether those who hold this

\* "For I see through the whole text of the Divine Scripture, six ages of the world's labor, as it were, distinctly bounded, so that there might be hope of a rest in the seventh; also, that these same six ages have a likeness to those days in which all those things were made, which the Scripture declares that God made. For the origin, or first times, of the human race, in which it began to enjoy the light, is well compared to that first day in which God made the light."

view, had any definite thought of a longer or shorter duration, or of any duration at all. They saw that there was something remarkable, something extra-ordinary, about these days. This appeared on the face of the text, without the suggestion of any scientific knowledge, or theory, which might have given a direction to their contemplations. Having, therefore, nothing of this latter clue to guide them in explaining the mysterious language, they ran into the allegorical, the mystical, the metaphysical. We quote them here, as we have done before,—and the point cannot be too strongly urged,—for the purpose of showing that this easy taking for granted that the Mosaic periods, and especially the seventh, were, of course, common solar days of exactly twenty-four hours each, neither more nor less, is alien to the spirit of ancient interpretations brought out long before there had been the first conception of such a science as geology, or of any scientific objections to anything that might be regarded as the literal meaning of the passage. It is worthy of note, too, that what with some of the present day is so very easy, was with them their chief difficulty. They could not understand the Sabbath from creation as a common day, and were, therefore, driven to regard all the rest as anomalous.

A similar suggestion comes from another ancient notion, mentioned by Augustine, that the days of creation were representative of, and represented by, the supposed seven stages in human life, such as birth, infancy, youth, etc. It shows the same tendency. It comes from the laws of our thinking, thus to carry the analogies of the human life and growth, whether generic or individual, into the greater creations, and to regard

the world, too, as a series of growths, or natures, with its periods of birth, of infancy, of youth, of maturity,—with its mornings, its evenings, its spring, its autumn, its long winters of repose, its summers of reviviscence, corresponding to the shorter cycles of the animal and vegetable natures that exist upon it. It shows, too, what is of more importance in our exegesis, that the anomalous style of the narrative is felt to be in harmony with such analogies, and that what is now called by many the most natural is, in truth, the most forced and unnatural interpretation. Such has been the impression it has made on minds of the most varied constitution and temperament. To zealous students of the Bible in all ages, whether mystics like Philo, or philosophic theologians like Augustine, or practical matter of fact men like the historian Josephus, or of the higher order of rationalizing critics like the Jewish Maimonides, there has ever seemed something out of the usual line of interpretation in the Mosaic account of the world's origin. It was to them the narrative of great events that have their correspondences, but no identical repetitions either in the time or space of the present mundane age. It was a history of great events that took place, in fact, before our present sun-measured time began, and therefore, they could not help regarding it as having a meaning to which we can only approach by analogies wholly time-transcending, or transcending all its ordinary estimates.

Much more may we say this in reference to the seventh day specially. Augustine, and Pareus, and the whole class of profound and learned commentators whom they may be said to represent, have their attention drawn to points in the narrative,—whether assertions or omissions

—which the rationalizing critic passes by unheeded. Interpreters of the former stamp set out with the axiom that the Scripture is given by inspiration, and that there must, therefore, have been a design in everything that relates to its style, its language, its choice of words, its imagery, and, in general, its whole mode of communication to the souls of men. Hence they are struck with this change in the account of the seventh day. There must be some reason for this remarkable omission of what had been so regularly repeated at the close of all the preceding epochs. There must be some sense, at least, in which this first Sabbath is not yet finished. But if we put out of view the inadequate theory of the twenty-four solar hours, or disencumber ourselves of the impediments that come from so narrow an interpretation, the whole difficulty vanishes. What other reason could there have been for the omission, than that this seventh day or period had not yet come to a close? Even its morning had not yet arrived. We are still in the Sabbath eve, unless Christ's ascension were its terminating era. But what that Sabbath morning may be, we must learn from the Scriptures or never know at all. The Bible speaks of "the morning of the resurrection." Is it a mere figure, or something more than a figure,—a reality transcending in literal and substantial glory any of the matutinal periods of the earth's early physical formation? There is the "morning when the upright shall have the dominion," which dominion may be on this very planet. Or if this is thought to have too much difficulty attending it, there is also that morning of the latter day glory whose auroral effulgence is so vividly pictured by the rapt Hebrew Seers,—that glorious

morning when "Zion shall have put on her beautiful garments," her spotless Sabbath robes,—when the Church, for which the earth was made, "shall arise and shine, *for her Light has come* and the glory of her Lord has risen upon her,"—"when nations shall go by her *light* and kings by the splendor of her rising,"—when her risen "sun shall never more go down, for the Lord shall be her everlasting light\* and her God her glory." Instead of mediate or reflexive illumination through the heavenly bodies,

"The Light Himself shall shine  
Revealed,—and God's Eternal Day be thine."

All this is metaphor, it may be said, but how shall we decide which is the primary, and which the secondary, or metaphorical, sense of these words? How is it that there is hardly a language—perhaps no language—in which words for *light* and *truth*, *seeing* and *knowing*, are not from the same or kindred roots? And this is the Apostle's definition,—*πᾶν γὰρ τὸ φανερούμενον φῶς ἐστί, "For whatsoever doth make manifest is light,"* Ephesians, v, 13; that is, whatsoever reveals or *causes to appear* that which before was hidden, non-existent, or

\* Isaiah, lx, 19, *וְהָיָה לְאֵלֶיךָ, φῶς αἰῶνος, The light of her eternity, her age, her olam.* Any one who examines the passage must see that the word is in strong contrast with the terms expressive of times measured by the sun and moon in distinction from the greater sign of duration, or the greater light of the olamic period. "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, nor the moon thy splendor by night; but the Lord shall be thine eternal light." Or, as it is given in the noble Vulgate translation of the passage,—"*Non est tibi amplius sol ad lucendum per diem, nec splendor lunae illuminabit te; sed erit tibi Dominus in lucem sempiternam, et Deus tuus in gloriam tuam.*"

*unseen*, whether in the physical, the intellectual, or the spiritual world.

In such a view as this, however, everything depends upon the position to which we attain in the interpretation of Genesis. When the language there employed readily and naturally suggests to us the ideas of successive risings in the scale of creations, it is easy to transfer the same train of thought, without any consciousness of change in style, to this later and more glorious *olam*. We may conjecture, too, whence the Prophets derived this favorite imagery of the greater day and the greater light as compared with the sun-measured and moon-measured seasons. In such a panorama, the universal existence presents itself to us as an ascending series of mornings, manifestations, or appearings, from the lowest physical to the highest spiritual. There is a continual coming forth from the before "*unseen*." There is the *appearing* of the natural light out of chaos, the *appearing* of the dry land out of the watery wastes, the *appearing* of the expanse or firmament, with its apparatus for the fertilization of the earth, the *appearing* of the season-dividing celestial luminaries, the *appearing* of vegetable life, of animal life, of rational life,—and finally that for which all the rest are preparatory, the *manifestation* of the new life in Christ, and of the moral glory of God in "the *new heavens and new earth* wherein dwelleth righteousness." There is no break in the upward continuity, no proceeding per saltum, no awful chasm of all created being, to the dread brink of which the history of a brief six thousand years conducts us dimly back only to find it descending rapidly off by a few short diurnal steps into the utter blank of an ante-past eternity. On the other

view, everything, instead of being forced, rises according to the conceptions required by the very laws of thinking which God has given to us, whilst in the latest application as in the earliest, we feel that the terms are alike literal, alike metaphorical. The Apostle's definition still holds good throughout, "Whatsoever maketh manifest is light." Whatever dispensation causes to *appear* a new state of being supernaturally rising out of the old, thus revealing the ever ascending glory of God, is a new *morning*, the literal perfection of a new *day* in the ongoings of that kingdom which is called מלכות-לְבַרְכָּיִם, βασιλεία πάντων τῶν αἰώνων, *Regnum omnium saeculorum*,—*the kingdom of all worlds or ages*,—Psalms, cxlv, 13. Hence, too, in the highest, and widest, and most literal sense, is God called πατήρ τῶν φώτων, "the Father of Lights,"—light physical, light animal, or the "light of life," light rational, light spiritual. Whatsoever revealeth is light; and so Augustine understood literally the language of the Apostle, in Ephesians, v, 13. *Nec quisquam arbitretur illud quod dixi de luce spiritali, non jam proprie, sed quasi figurate atque allegorice convenire ad intelligendum diem et vesperam et mane. Sed aliter quidem quam in hac consuetudine quotidianae lucis hujus et corporalis; non tamen tanquam hic proprie, ibi figurate. UBI ENIM MELIOR ET CERTIOR LUX, IBI VERIOR ETIAM DIES; cur ergo non tam verior vespera et verius mane? Neque enim et Christus sic dicitur lux quomodo dicitur lapis, sed illud proprie, hoc utique figurate. Augustine De Genesi ad Literam, Lib. IV, Ch. xxviii.\**

\* Let no one think that what I have said of the spiritual light is not to be properly, or literally, but only figuratively, as it were, or allegorically understood of the day and evening

A chief objection to the view here taken of the Sabbath, has been derived from its being mentioned in the fourth commandment in immediate connection with the human solar Sabbath, and the six solar days of human labor. It must be seen, however, that everything here depends upon the settlement of the previous interpretation of the days in Genesis. Whatever they mean there is to be carried along in the exegesis of the later passage. The language of the fourth commandment is only a repetition, and there is nothing in it inconsistent with the idea of the lesser cycle being made the standing type or representative of the greater, the flowing and recurring of that which has become fixed and constant in the higher chronology.

But the difficulty, it is contended, is in the close connection or juxtaposition of the words, or the immediate repetition of the same word in different senses. Admitting, says the objector, that the word day may be used for cycle, still it is contrary to the laws of a sound interpretation to suppose that there would be so sudden a change from one application of the term to the other in the same passage. We cannot concede the force of this argument. In the first place, the word is not taken in two distinct senses, or in two senses at all. It has its clear essential cyclical idea in both uses. Duration, or,

and morning. It is, indeed, to be taken otherwise than according to our familiar notion of this daily and corporeal light; yet not as though the one was literal, the other figurative. **FOR WHERE THERE IS THE BETTER AND SURER LIGHT, THERE IS THE MORE REAL DAY.** For neither is Christ called the Light in the same way as he is called a stone (the corner stone); but the former properly or literally, the latter only figuratively.



rather, a certain fixed duration, is not of the essence of the term. This is an incidental to be determined always by that of which it is affirmed or predicated. Days are greater or smaller, higher or lower, according to the conception we have of them as God's days, or man's days, as the great days of the creative acts, or the lesser cycles of our transient and oft recurring human labors. We are astonished at the argument, because it so ignores some of the most impressive analogies of the Bible, and is, in this respect, so contrary to its general idea of representing the greater by the less; as in its great scheme of salvation the individual stands for the family, the family for the nation, the chosen nation for the universal earthly Church, and this for God's aeonian Kingdom in the heavens. Besides, there are in other parts of the Bible the clearest and most indisputable examples of similar transfers of meaning. There is one in reference to this very word, and of so marked a character that it is strange it should have escaped the notice of the learned and ingenious critics who have made this objection. "Let us walk as in the *day*," says Paul, Romans, xiii, 13, "not in chambering and drunkenness." The term is evidently used for *day light*, the *light of the sun*, as distinguished from the night, the season of shameful crimes. As he speaks, 1 Thessalonians, v, 5, of the children of the *day* and of the *night* under the same aspect. But how sudden the change to the higher sense, and yet without any formal or outward intimation of metaphor, or any express or implied recognition of one as being any more a literal sense than the other,—“For the *night* is far gone, the *day* is at hand,”—that day of Christ's appearing when “The Light Himself shall shine,” the

day that comes next in the great olamic calendar, the day that was very near in the chronology of the *ages*, however remote it might seem as reckoned by the slow passing solar periods. The Apostle surveyed the world from a position whence the temporal or temporary was ever merging into the eternal. To his vision, years are but of small account; he does not reckon by seasons; the very  $\sigma\chi\eta\mu\alpha$ , or "fashion of the kosmos is passing away," the ages are hastening on, the old dispensation is but of yesterday, the new cycle is at hand; and hence for him nothing was more easy and natural than such a transition from the days of time to the days of eternity.

This objection, drawn from the supposed different use of words in the fourth commandment, is the more untenable because it overlooks an answer which is patent on the very face of the language. Those to whom it was immediately addressed, may or may not have had the distinction in their minds. The days may have been all alike to them. We are not concerned to determine here how far the conceptions of the medium, or of the first recipients, are to us the true measures of the meaning of inspiration. That subject has been already discussed at some length in a previous chapter, and to it the reader is again referred. But this we say,—there are other parts of the language of the commandment to which the objection has a still stronger application, because under an identity of words there is even a wider and more remarkable transition in idea. It is somewhat hidden in our translation, but may be clearly brought out by a little attention to the language. In the Hebrew it is unmistakable. "Six days shalt thou labor and *do all thy work*," (עָשִׂיתָ.) "For in six days the Lord *made* or wrought (עָשָׂה) the

heavens and the earth." The Hebrew word for *working* is the same in both clauses. Now who shall dare to say here that God's work and man's work, or God's manner of working and man's manner of working, are the same, or to be taken in any aspects of mere resemblance, because the *same term is used of both*, or of the common idea that unites them both? Let us, then, simply supply the suggested thoughts. In six human days shalt thou labor and do all thy *human* work, for in six *divine* days the Lord did his divine or *superhuman* work in the creation of the heavens and the earth. But this is only your filling up, says the objector. And yet, what does it give us but the ideas which must come up to every spiritual or truly rational mind that has a right view of what is demanded in interpretation, when the same or similar words are applied to the works and ways of men in connection with the ineffably higher works and ways of God?

Again. "Remember the *Sabbath* day," or day of *rest*,—as every one knows the word means in the Hebrew,—“for God *rested* on the *Sabbath* day.” There is the same word for rest (or Sabbath) in both cases; but has it the same identical meaning? Is there no transition to the higher idea, although in such immediate verbal connection? Is God's rest our rest? Are not “his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts, even as the heavens are higher than the earth?” Is not the measure of them “longer than the earth and broader than the sea?”

It is hard to see the fallacy in this presentation of the language and ideas. The objector may be challenged to show how the argument does not hold good in the

one case as in the other. We feel it easy to pass from the reduced to the enlarged scale in respect to the ideas of *power*, why should there be any more difficulty in regard to those of *time*?

The truth is, that just such transitions are in perfect consistency with the outer language as well as inner soul of Scripture. The *space* representations of the tabernacle are types of the corresponding glories in the upper sphere; and so the *time* periods of earth are memorials of the higher cosmical chronology; our diurnal and annual revolutions follow, although at a vast distance, the shadows on the dial plate of the aeonian duration. "The secrets of wisdom are double to that which is;" or there is a double knowledge pertaining to the reality of being,—if we may thus accommodate the strange language of Zophar the Naamathite.\* The thought has a striking application to our present enquiry. In this view of the words of the fourth commandment, and of kindred passages, everything falls into harmony. There is a harmony of language and a harmony of conception. The duplication is perfect throughout the scale. There are the passing solar *days*, the lowly *work*, the restoring *rest* of the children of time; we rise above them to the contemplation of the immeasurable epochs, the transcendent energising, the ineffable repose of Him who is said to "inhabit eternity." The transition is equally easy, equally natural, equally truthful, in regard to each duality in this triple division of ideas. It is sanctioned by the highest reason, and is, at the same time, in perfect accordance with the *usus loquendi* of the sacred language.

\*Job, xi, 6. The word *הוֹשֵׁנָה*, in this singular passage, more properly signifies essence, reality, than wisdom or knowledge.

## CHAPTER XXII.

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### ANTIQUITY OF THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT.

WAS IT DERIVED FROM THE EGYPTIAN, PHOENICIAN, OR OTHER ANCIENT COSMOGONIES?—ANTI-BIBLICAL SPIRIT OF CERTAIN COMMENTATORS.—JEWS NOT A SCIENTIFIC OR PHILOSOPHICAL PEOPLE.—OTHER COSMOGONIES EXHIBIT A PANTHEISTIC PHILOSOPHY.—THEOGONIES RATHER THAN COSMOGONIES.—PINDAR.—WHICH IS THE ORIGINAL AND WHICH THE COPY?—THE PURE THEISM OF THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT AN EVIDENCE OF ITS GREAT ANTIQUITY.—OTHER MYTHS NATIONAL.—THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION HAS NOTHING PECULIARLY JEWISH.—STANDS AT THE HEAD OF ALL HISTORY.—WHAT WAS ITS DATE?—ABRAHAM.—ENOCH.—ITS STYLE.—ITS UNITY.—NOT A GROWTH LIKE OTHER MYTHS.

No scholar can carefully examine the myths and traditions and poetry of the ancient world in their references to the origin of things, without being struck with the appearance of the Mosaic facts. They make themselves evident amid all the distortions and obscurities, corruptions and additions, with which they have been handed down. These resemblances have been so unmistakable that some anti-biblical critics have not hesitated to charge the imitation on the Scriptural account, and to represent it as derived from the early heathen myths. They dispose at once, in their way, of the whole matter by saying it is only "in accordance with the ancient ideas," and this they would have their readers accept as a most sufficient and satisfactory account. But the problem is still unsolved. The most important question still remains unanswered—Whence came these "ancient ideas?" They tell us Moses took them from the Egyptians and

Phœnicians; and this is about all they have to say of the origin of a narrative so wondrous in itself, in its own unrivalled grandeur, while it presents so marked a contrast, in other respects, with the monstrous myths to which they would trace its origin. Thus Eichorn, Hasse, and other German critics of the same school. The more sober Rosenmüller gives us the same opinion in a few sentences, as though it were a matter too unimportant to be dwelt upon, or too plain for a serious and elaborate argument. "Who can believe," he says, "that the learned and philosophic Egyptians and Phœnicians could have borrowed such things from the illiterate and unscientific Hebrews?" But could he not have seen that this argument, if it have any force at all, is far more applicable to the sublime theology of the Hebrews than to their cosmogony? To say the least, his *quis credat* would have had as much pertinency in the one case as in the other. Who could believe, if we did not know the fact, that the illiterate and unscientific Hebrews should have had so pure and sublime a theism as is presented in the Psalms, the Prophets, the Book of Job, or as appears in their history, their poetry, and their law, whilst the more civilized Phœnicians worshipped a fish, the philosophic Egyptians debased themselves to the adoration of calves and crocodiles, and the refined Greeks, amid their rabble of vulgar gods and goddesses, could play the brute in the worship of Pan, or sink below the brute in the horrible obscenities of the phallic or Bacchic processions? Whence the difference between Moses and the theogony of Hesiod, between Isaiah and Homer, between David and Pindar, between the author of the book of Job and Æschylus, the purest and most religious of the Grecian

dramatists? Is the problem insolvable in the one aspect without the aid of the supernatural, why not also in the other? Is the Hebrew cosmogony, wonderful as it is, a more wonderful thing than their theology and the unique historical position it gives them among the nations of the ancient world? Is the former so much above the uncultivated Jewish mind that we are compelled to regard it as borrowed from a people of higher conceptions, whilst the latter is all their own, their peculiar unchallenged possession in the immense moral waste by which they were for ages surrounded.

It is no digression from our main subject to remark here, that amid all the trifling of this unspiritual school, there is nothing that goes beyond this constant attempt to trace the Jewish law, and Jewish belief, and Jewish religion, to the influence of Egyptian ideas. No evangelical narrowness ever so warped the Bible in favor of untenable dogmas, as they warp history, and the Bible, too, in support of their extravagant anti-biblical hypotheses. Carry them out, and they would make the purest monotheism the direct offspring of the most degraded polytheism the world ever knew. They would represent the spiritual, the formless, as coming out of a material or sense imagery that has never been exceeded in grossness of conception. Still more monstrous and perverse is it when there is an attempt made, in all apparent seriousness, to trace the Jewish law of the ten commandments to the same source. "*Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.*" This, they would say, comes from the nation that worshipped the crocodile and the ibis! "*Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image of anything in heaven and earth;*" "*for ye saw no manner*

of similitude when the Lord spake to you in Horeb." This thought, so spiritual, so superhuman, was conceived in the land of the sphynxes, and among temples covered with every form of deified animation that ever crawled upon the earth, or swarmed in the waters! The holy rest of the Sabbath, with its intermission of labor to master and servant, to man and beast, came from a people in whose subsequent history no trace of such an institution has ever been found, and the grossness of whose bondage was ever at war with the faintest recognition of the philanthropic as well as religious idea! The purity of the seventh commandment grew up in the land of adultery and incest; it had its birth in the midst of a licentiousness so revolting that it defiles the pages of history, and renders almost unreadable the otherwise chaste Herodotus! A reverence which fears to mention the name of Deity was derived from a people among whom nothing was more common or more profanely used than all the appellations of their divinities! And so we might go through the Jewish religion and moral law. *Quis credat?* We may well employ Rosenmüller's own question, — Who could believe this unless it be those who are determined to treat the Bible as a myth, and reject everything which goes to prove its great antiquity?

But to return to our more immediate subject — It may, perhaps, be said, in defense of the higher character of the Greek and Egyptian myths, that they had a philosophy concealed under them. Conceding this, however, only makes the argument stronger against the gratuitous assumptions of the anti-biblical commentators. Be it so that in this respect these nations excelled the Jews to any extent that may be desired, the statement at once



supplies its own answer. There was no science, no philosophy, among the Jews. Granted; we say. But, then, there is nothing scientific, nothing that assumes to be philosophical in the Mosaic account of the creation. There is nothing that carries any appearance of either in its simple yet sublime account of supposed supernatural facts. But the mythologies with which it is compared do almost all present something of this character. There is the appearance of a philosophy mingled with all their extravagance; and this appearance is proof of their later origin. It takes the shape of the mythical, but still it is there, and the careful reader can always discover it. There are what the Germans and Germanizing men are so fond of calling *ideas*. They find them in every part of the old mythologies, unless where they are utterly baffled by the grotesqueness of the Hindoo, or the unmeaning horrors of the Scandinavian legends. Among the Greeks, they see them every where. From Kronos and his golden age to Silenus, from Zeus to the river god, from the Muses to the Satyrs, from Prometheus to Priapus, everything is full of *ideas*. They are in all the legends of Homer, they swarm in every part of Hesiod's Theogonia. Now there is a vast deal of extravagance in all this, and yet some truth. There are certainly in the Greek myths, and in the Greek cosmogonies, the appearances of what are thus called *ideas*—in other words, of after-thoughts, to which the story is made to correspond, (its original outlines being perverted for that purpose,) or for which it was wholly invented, or, at least, supplied with new proper names that might give it more of the mythical or allegorical aspect. Thus there is found a physical meaning, a moral meaning, an his-

torical meaning, in what was originally either pure fancy, or an obscured tradition of early facts, like the Mosaic account of the creation, the fall, or the flood. No man can read Hesiod's *Theogonia* without being struck with its purely physical ideas. So Plato finds ideas in Homer's legends of Oceanus and Tethys. The philosopher sees a cosmogony there, whether the poet thought of it or not. These remarks hold true of the character of the earliest Egyptian myths. In other words, they have assumed what may be called a mythico-philosophic character. This is the first form philosophy took after the pure theism of the patriarchal ages had commenced its first transition to pantheism, or *nature worship*. The seeds are discoverable in the Orphic theology, which doubtless was an early reality, however spurious we may regard the present hymns which bear that name. Now this mythico-ideal character, although of respectable antiquity, is not a trait of the earliest mind. Men are not first occupied with *ideas*, in this philosophic sense of the term, but with the great *facts* of nature and origin so far as they can get at them, either by observation or some higher than human teaching. One might suppose from the speculations of certain writers that the first men did nothing but allegorize, or think out the most recondite truths in nature and morals, and then clothe these ideas in the most ingeniously contrived myths. Such was, doubtless, to some extent, the case in a later age, when the traditional meaning was lost, or obscured, or the early narrative in its sublime simplicity was felt to have too little of the wild, the gorgeous, or the horrifying of the later and progressive imagination. At this stage men began to look back of the simple facts, that is, to

philosophize or invent reasons, and hence those additions, perversions, and new aspects, which gave rise to the subsequent mythology with its mythico-philosophical character. But in that extreme antiquity to which this record in Genesis points us, and to which it bears every mark of itself belonging, such could not have been the condition of the human mind. It does not correspond to what we know of the nature of man. It is not supported by that analogy between the individual life, and the life of the world or race, which some of these very theorists are so fond of tracing. In the earliest dawning of our perceptions and our intellect, we are not occupied with fables. Our first lessons are not conveyed in this way. There is a wiser instinct in our teachers, there is a better guide in our own natures. Our first observations, and our first teachings, are the soberest facts. Fables come in afterward. They make part of the instruction of the boyhood which succeeds the earliest state. They indicate a change in the condition of the intellect and the imagination. They imply the inventive, the comparative, the analogous, the ideal. We do not altogether believe in this mode of representing the infancy of the world as corresponding to the infancy of the individual, but in the aspect under which we now view it, it presents some striking features of resemblance. In both states the real must go before and predominate over the ideal. In respect to both may we say that the mythical, the mythological, unerringly denotes a later period.

Throughout the earliest Pagan myths, there is evidence of a philosophic nature-worship. A pantheistic atmosphere is not only modifying, but transforming everything into shapes that may accord with its own dreamy mysti-

cism. In the Mosaic account, on the other hand, the theistic element is not only pre-eminent, but all-pervading. All is pure, severe, sublime, truthful, worthy of a narrative that professes to set forth the great ante-mundane works which no science could reach, no poetry imagine, no mysticism could render more rational or more significant. There is no attempt at explanation, through any philosophical notions, either directly expressed or exhibited in the form of myths. There is betrayed by the writer, whoever he may be, no consciousness of that human element that demands explanation, or would seek in an ideal a ground of credibility for which we would not trust the events themselves. Instead of a representation of *ideas*, it is a record of six mighty *acts* of God, each commencing a new order of things, and all terminating in that repose of the creative power, and that consequent regularity of nature, which is the present rest of the world.

Thus, the very fact that the Hebrews were a more simple people, a more primitive people, or that they had less science and philosophy than their neighbors, makes it all the less likely that they should have taken myths dressed up in the extravagances of the Hindoo legends, or representative of the physical fancies of the Egyptian and Hesiodean theogonies, and adopted them as their own at all,—much less that by a reverse process they should have stripped them of all their physical idealism, and reduced them to the majestic simplicity that appears in the Mosaic history of the creation. What most emphatically forbids any such thought, is the distinction to which we have already alluded, and which is so marked that no one who studies well both sides of the question can possibly overlook it. It is that the one is so purely

and even unphilosophically theistic, the others exhibit so manifestly the presence of pantheistic ideas. The Mosaic account is a record of the steps by which God *made* the world. The Pagan myths are, for the most part, *theogonies* as well as *cosmogonies*,—that is, they give the generation of the universe, including Gods as well as men. They make us all the children of one mother. When we come to trace strictly the leading idea, plants, animals, men, and divinities, even the highest Gods, are all, in some way, developments from one unaided and eternal nature. The language of Pindar (Nem. vi.) would give the spirit of almost every cosmogony, but that of the Bible, not even excepting some which have their authors and admirers in the modern world.

“Ἐν ἀνδρῶν ἔν θεῶν γένος, ἐκ μιᾶς δὲ πνέομεν  
ματρὸς ἀμφοτέρωι.

“One race of Gods and men, from one mother breathe we all.” And this mother is nature, or, as expressed in the grosser form, the earth. So Hesiod begins his genealogy with Γαῖα who first gives birth to Οὐρανός, or the Heaven. From these are born Κρόνος (or Χρόνος) and the Titans,—in other words, Time and the mighty mechanical powers of the world. Gods, indeed, are mentioned, “Gods many,” and demigods in vast numbers, but the highest gods are only the older powers, the first born of this universal parent. In this one respect, how immense the difference between all such mythologies and the Mosaic narrative! How irresistible the argument from this alone, that it must have had an origin, not only totally distinct from, but immeasurably above, them all. In the one, God is the supernatural *cause* as well as the supernatural governor of nature, in the others, the

Divinity, if we can still for convenience retain the name, is only Nature's first born, her highest or oldest development.

But these critics are fighting shadows. The serious defender of the Mosaic account will never accept the issue which would seem to assume on his side, and as his ground, that this view of creation originated among the Jews, just as the Phœnician myths originated among the Phœnicians,—thus making it at all a question of the superior antiquity of their respective claims. He takes the ground that in itself it was much older than either or any of these nationalities, whether Jewish or heathen. He maintains that the account of it, as we now have it, never grew out of the institutions or ideas of any historical people, but was given by direct inspiration to Moses, or to some more ancient seer (perhaps an Antediluvian) from whom it was handed down to Moses, and was thus incorporated by Moses in his Book of Genesis or Generations. Such a view in respect to its first human author, does not, in the least, detract from its true divine inspiration. In fact, we find it more easy to believe in its divine origin when we thus regard it as given in the earliest times, and to the earliest men, and in the earliest language that was spoken on the globe. Such a view, too, best agrees with its air of extreme antiquity, as shown by that primitive simplicity, or freedom from the mythico-ideal, to which we have already adverted.

There is no age to which we can assign it but the very earliest. We need not stop to show that it could not have been invented in that late period of the Jewish captivity to which the neological critics would give all the earlier parts of the Old Testament. Every one who

is familiar with the state of the nations at that time, both as exhibited in sacred and profane history, knows that it could not have originated then. It has a look immensely older than anything that was the product of that late and most corrupt age of the world. But, as we go back, we find almost equal difficulty in every other time we may assume. Take the date of the Jewish monarchy, the days of Samuel, of the Judges, of the Conquest of Canaan, of the wanderings in the wilderness, of the bondage in Egypt. We feel that none of these could naturally have given birth to such myth (to call it so by way of accommodation) if it had then, for the first time, been thought of, and thought out. We might, indeed, have expected it from the historian of Sinai, and the author of the Ninetieth Psalm, but aside from the character of Moses, there is nothing in any of these ages from which it could have spontaneously arisen as a natural result of their modes of feeling and thinking. If Moses was the first writer, it is assumed to have been given him by direct inspiration. And this must always be regarded as the claim, at least, whoever is the author. It treats of matters utterly beyond all human knowledge, and all human tradition. It is, therefore, what it professes to be, a revelation from God, or the boldest, the most impious, the most deliberately designed of forgeries. Other mythologies are protected from this charge by the supposition of their having been the growth of time. But this is beyond all doubt a unity. It had no growth. It is the unique conception of the sublimest order of human genius—that high and devout genius which we find it so difficult to associate with the ideas of lying or deliberate imposture,—or it was given to some human

thought by Him who alone could know the wondrous facts it professes to set forth.

Regarding it then as older than Moses, we still find it difficult to stop at any time short of the very earliest as its only true and proper date. It has an older look than the days of the nomadic Patriarchs. It possesses every appearance of having been an ancient, a very ancient tradition, when Abraham set out from Ur of the Chaldees, and the Canaanites had already settled in the land. It is only when we carry it across the mighty flood, and travel with it up to the days of Enoch and Seth, that we find something in our conceived condition of the world that seems in harmony with the majestic air, the pictorial language, the lonely grandeur of this oldest of human records. There is something in the account of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, and of that superhuman life which is so sublimely described as a "walking with God," that gives us the best idea of the state of soul to which such a revelation might be made,—a revelation that might be by direct outward vocal communication before "God took him" from the earth, or by an interior inspiration sounding in harmony with the musings of a spirit to whom nature was yet all fresh, all wondrous fact, too real to allow of any demand for myth, too newly impressive in itself for any philosophic ideal, or any play of fancy, and whose pure theism had as yet suffered no worldly haze to dim the line which separates the Creator from his works. "And Enoch walked with God." When we find something like this to which we can trace the wild legends of Sanchoniatho, or the grotesque Egyptian animalism, or the Hesiodic genealogy of all things from earth or nature, we may have some patience with



the foolish argument that the Mosaic account must have been derived from these because the Hebrews were an unphilosophical and unscientific people.

There must have been some older source from which Egyptians, Phœnicians, and Hebrews, all copied their cosmogonies. As far as they were mere national creeds they stand alike,—only the Hebrews, from their want of a philosophy, or mystic theology, adhered more closely to the simplicity and pure theism of the primitive account, whilst the others dressed it up in legends, whose manner of introduction any one acquainted with the antiquities of those nations would have no great difficulty in accounting for. In all the others we discover the peculiarities of nation, of age, of partial modes of thinking. In the Mosaic there is nothing national. It is altogether separate from the Jewish national history. It stands away back of the earliest annals in which their national characteristics begin to make themselves manifest. Thus, standing at the head of all history, it belongs to all nations. It is no more distinctively Jewish, as far as the known history of this people is concerned, than it is Egyptian, or Greek, or Babylonian, unless we regard as Jewish peculiarities the grandeur and purity of its theism; but then there is at once an end of the neologist's argument, which is grounded solely on a supposed inferiority of the Hebrew race in the higher ideas, and the consequent probability of their having derived their cosmogonies from the more philosophical and scientific nations. The method of argument adopted by this class of critics often defeats itself. They tell us, for example, that the Mosaic account was derived from the Persian. Now this latter distinctly taught that the world was

created in six *times* or periods. And yet in interpreting Genesis these same commentators will have it *days* of twenty-four hours and nothing else. Can there be any doubt as to the animus here? The Bible is to be rendered as objectionable as possible, even if it can only be done by stultifying their own favorite positions.

But which is the copy and which the original? This, after all, is the great question, and we think that no one who views it attentively in the light of reason and history can have any very great trouble in deciding it. Which preserves the strong, clear features of the primitive painting in its simplicity, its unity, its consistency, and which exhibits the marks of the copy in overloaded additions, incongruous mixtures, and those inharmonious touches which furnish unmistakable evidence that the execution and the design, the sketching and the filling up, are from different and very dissimilar minds? Or, to drop all metaphor, which presents most strongly the impress of afterthoughts or ideas, modified by the peculiar ways of thinking, of believing, or of philosophizing, that are known by us to have characterized certain nations and ages? The answer of the neologist falls entirely short of the great issues suggested by such queries. To say that the "Mosaic cosmogony is in accordance with ancient ideas," or "ancient mythologies," is only solemn trifling. Whence came these "ancient ideas?" Whence came this wondrous account of creation,—of facts which must have been before all human knowledge? Let a thinking man set himself seriously down to the solution of the problem. Let him estimate the mighty difficulties which attend any answer but that which traces it to divine inspiration, and he will have a stronger evidence of its authenticity than could perhaps be derived from

any process of argumentation. He will find himself involved in mysteries very much like those that are in the way when we attempt to account for the existence of the Jewish people among the nations of the earth, or the life of Paul among the philosophers, or the establishment of Christianity on any mere natural or historical grounds.

In whose mind was first born this wondrous myth, (if any will still call it so,) or rather this wondrous vision, in all the rigid truthfulness of its unity and consistency? Whence this remarkable order of ideas so different from what some would regard as the natural offspring of that simple, unphilosophical, unscientific age? Whence this peculiar chronological aspect, this succession of periods, or days, call them what we will, rising from the chaotic, the unformed, through such regular and harmonious gradations into higher and higher forms of life? There is no attempt to determine the times or the ages. They may have been not only unknown to the writer, but unconceived. Still, *succession* is the great fact, or series of facts, revealed, and this is what we have called its time-aspect, the chronological feature by which it is distinguished from other cosmogonies. Now, had it been the product of the mere human inventive faculty, we think it would have been altogether the other way. Imposing space creations, in which space and power, not time, were the predominant notions, would have been the most natural result of the mere imagination aroused by the contemplation of the spatial glories of the heavens, or of the stupendous objects that everywhere meet the gaze of the senses upon the earth. It would, in all likelihood, have begun with the building of the celestial spheres, and would never have made the creation of the stars a

mere note or passing scholium intended to denote simply their phenomenal relation to the earth as measures of time and seasons. It would have placed the making of the firmament and celestial luminaries among the earliest and most striking acts of its gorgeous architecture. It would have described the cutting out of the rivers, the heaping up of the mountains, the levelling of the plains. And thus the space aspect, we may repeat it, would have been the prominent and controlling feature, instead of that remarkable succession of times which we find in the account, and which never could have been suggested by the sense, or the experience, or by anything in the philosophy or science of the earliest days.

Another striking trait of the Mosaic cosmogony is its unbroken wholeness or unity, and this furnishes an answer to another method that might be used to account for its introduction and prevalence in the world. A myth, it may be said, is not necessarily a lie, an imposture, a studied and fabricated deception. It *grows* up in time; it comes from some germ of fact or tradition, and is added to by little and little. But such an explanation, or such a defence, however it might suit other myths, could not be made in respect to the narrative in Genesis. It is, we repeat it, the boldest, the most impious of lies, or the most wonderful of mere imaginative conceptions, or the grandest of revealed physical truths. It is a sudden, a full-grown birth. Other myths are evidently *growths*. We can, in most cases, tell whence and how they came, from what sources they derived their various and oftentimes incoherent parts, in what circumstances of national peculiarity they were fashioned, by what ideas they were nurtured, how they sprang one from another, and how they have modified one another. They are

*growths* as evidently as the geological formations, and thus we see how they might have come, and did come, from successive accretions, whether we know, or not, the date or periods of their history. But this, we say, is a whole, as much as any theorem in geometry. Be it invention or inspiration, it is the invention or the inspiration of one mind. Other cosmogonies, though bearing unmistakable evidence of their descent from the Mosaic, have had successive deposits, in successive series, of mythological strata. This stands towering out in lonely sublimity, like the everlasting granite of the Alps or the Himalaya as compared with the changing alluvium of the Nile or the Ganges. As the serene air that ever surrounds the head of Mont Blanc excels in purity the mists of the fen, so does the lofty theism of the Mosaic account rise high above the nature-worship of the Egyptian and Hesiodic theogonies. "In the beginning God made the heavens and the earth. And the earth was waste and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God brooded over the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and it was light. And God saw the light that it was fair, and God divided the light from the darkness. And thus there was an evening and a morning— one day?" What is there like it, or to be at all compared with it, in any mythology on earth? There it stands, high above them all, and remote from them all, in its air of great antiquity, in its unaccountableness, in its serene truthfulness, in its unapproachable sublimity, in that impress of divine majesty and ineffable holiness which even the unbelieving neologist has been compelled to acknowledge, and by which every devout reader feels that the first page in Genesis is forever distinguished from any mere human production.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

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### HEATHEN COSMOGONIES DERIVED FROM THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT.

MYTHS DERIVED FROM THE ACCOUNT OF THE BROODING SPIRIT.—MYTH OF INCUBATION OR THE EGG.—ARISTOPHANES.—EROS OR LOVE.—THE CHAOS.—MOSAIC IDEA OF SEPARATION OR DIVISION.—HOMER'S MYTHS OF OCEANUS AND TETHYS.—THE SEA THE MOTHER OF ANIMALS.—THALES MAKES WATER THE OLDEST ELEMENT.—KRONOS SON OF URANUS.—TIME SON OF HEAVEN.—DIODORUS SICULUS.—REMARKABLE COINCIDENCES BETWEEN THE LANGUAGE OF OVID AND THAT OF MOSES.

WE have endeavored to show the striking differences between the Mosaic and all Pagan cosmogonies. And yet the proof is abundant that the latter were derived from the former. Amid all their contortions and deformities, the old features are still visible. The derived myths are full of the legendary, the monstrous, the incoherent; and the reason is not difficult to discover. These deformities will be generally found to have come from the perversion of what is strictly phenomenal language into an actual identity with the ineffable fact it was employed to represent. We may give a good example of this by calling to mind again what was said about that word מְרַחֶפֶת, *merahepheth*, Genesis, i, 2. "And the spirit hovered or *brooded* over the waters." The term is very peculiar. It denotes a rapid, fluttering, throbbing motion, such as we naturally associate with warm inward feeling. From such a conception of *pulsation* or *throb-*

*bing* comes the sense it has, Jeremiah, xiii, 9. Hence, too, its connection with the idea of *life* and *love* as kindred, or perhaps identical, states of being. It appears, especially in its Syriac use, and this is entitled to the greater consideration from the fact that we have reason to regard the Syriac as even an older branch of the Shemitic family than the Hebrew, and as having thus preserved more of the primitive force and life of the root. In this language, which, at all events, was derived from, and closely related to, the ancient vernacular of Laban and the fathers of Abraham, רחם has the same sense with the Hebrew רחם, that is, to love with the most tender affection, as a mother loves her offspring. Hence the Syriac noun, רוחפא, *affectus vehemens, amor intensus ac tener*; as we find it in numerous places of the Syriac versions of the Old and New Testament. The same term also signifies the fluttering and brooding motion of a bird, and hence the sense of cherishing and warming which the Hebrew verb possesses, Deuteronomy, xxxii, 2. In all these aspects we judge of its application to the action of the Ruah Elohim, Genesis, i, 2, Qui rudi terrae moli incubabat fovens et vivificans. *Gesenius*. Now from these old conceptions connected with this remarkable word, and from what is said in another part, of the over-brooded waters bringing forth the fish and creeping things, has come that wide-spread myth of *incubation*, or the origin of all things from the creative egg, an idea which is to be found more or less in all mythologies. They confounded the representative *image* with the *fact*, or put it for the fact. There is also something very striking in the analogy, if it is not something more than analogy, which is suggested by the known steps in the process of incuba-

tion. The egg is primarily like the earth, a fluid, colorless, formless and unarranged. The first effect, the first start of life, is in a pulsatile or throbbing motion communicated to the whole mass. It is the first beat of what is in the beginning the every where diffused heart, and this is the commencement of that series, or *τροχὸς γενέσεως*\*, or "wheel of generation," which, after it has run its round of appointed *days* or periods, comes forth a finished microcosm, with all its solids and fluids so arranged as to constitute an organic harmony in most striking contrast with its former dark and chaotic state. We do not wonder that in so many myths the egg, together with the process of incubation, has been taken as the symbol of the world's birth and growth. But as we have said, it was a confounding of the phenomenal language with the ultimate and ineffable fact, and this has been the source of all similar perversions.

From these early senses of the Hebrew and Syriac words, came the corresponding myth of Eros or Love, as one of the oldest powers in the birth of the world. Hence, doubtless, the source of that remarkable representation which Aristophanes sets forth in his Comedy of the Birds. We give a very literal prose translation — "Chaos was, and Night, and Erebus black, and Tartarus wide. No earth, nor air, nor sky was yet; when in the immeasurable bosom of Erebus (or the chaotic darkness, *עֵל־בְּנֵי תְהוֹמֹת*,) winged Night brought forth first of all the egg from which, in after revolving periods, sprang Eros, the much desired, glittering with golden wings, and Eros, again, in union with Chaos, produced the brood of the human race, and brought it first to

\*James, iii, 6. Ecclesiastes, xii, 6.



light." Hence that old myth, of which there is such frequent mention in the later Orphic hymns, of *Phanes*, or the Light, the *visible*, the *phenomenal*, that is first born from the egg, and who, on this account, is called *ὄογενής*. The intelligent reader must see here this same idea that appears in the fragments of Empedocles, and in some of the traditions of Plato. Eros, or Love, is the great principle of beauty, order and harmony, the first born, in the order of creation, and the introducer of order and harmony in all that follows.

The references to the chaos are much more numerous and striking. We can only briefly give them without occupying space in comment, which, perhaps, for most readers, would be unnecessary. The lines from Hesiod have been already quoted. Chaos was the *first born*, then the "broad-bosomed Earth," then Eros, or Love. From Chaos were born Nox (*night*) and Erebus. From Nox was born Aether and Day. This order is invariable. In all mythologies, oriental or occidental, night is before the day, just as it is in the Mosaic order.\* We might make numerous extracts to the same purpose from the Argonautica of Apollonius, but these are to be regarded as the mere echo of the older poets. One passage is remarkable for the prominence it gives to that idea of separation or division which is so repeated in Genesis. "He sang how earth, and sky, and sea, were mingled all in one common mass and form, and how each was *parted* from the other,"

διέκριθεν ἀμφὶς ἕκαστα. Lib. I, 496.

\* So Plutarch, in his Treatise on the question, *Quis est Deus Judæorum*, or Who is the God of the Jews? (Leip. vol. 14, p. 283,) says that the Egyptians maintained that Night, or the darkness, was older than the Day.

To the same effect, the remarkable lines from the Fragment of Euripides Menalippus,

ὡς οὐρανός τε γαῖα τ' ἦν μορφή μία,  
ἔπειθ' ὁ' ΕΧΩΡΙΣΘΗΣΑΝ ἀλλήλων δίχρα  
τίκτουςι πάντα.\*

Here is the same idea of *separation* as when we read in Genesis, "And God *divided* the light from the darkness," "the waters from the waters,"—"And God said, Let the waters be gathered together, and let the dry land appear." Plato finds a cosmogonical myth in that Orphic line of Homer (Iliad, xiv, 201, 302, Plato Cratylus, 401, C.) in which he represents "Oceanus as the parent or genesis of all things." Homer doubtless received it as a mere myth, and employs it in his poetry without any higher idea. But Plato regards it as presenting the prominent thought which the philosopher Thales had derived from some old source, that water was the primitive generative element. No careful reader of the Bible can fail to see that it has travelled down from a still greater antiquity, and is, in fact, the Mosaic representation of the original state of the earth as a mass of waters, and afterwards (verse 20) of the "waters bringing forth abundantly the moving things that have life." Hence, too, Æschylus calls the sea, or the water, under its feminine name, *πολύτεκνος Τηθύς*, prolific or all-breeding Tethys, (Prom. Vinc. 137.) It may be thought that she is so styled from being the fabled mother of the numerous Oceanides, but these are only another mythical expression of the old idea. The very name implies

\* How Heaven and Earth of old were all one form, and when they were *parted* from each other, they gave birth to all things, etc.

maternal fertility, and cannot be mistaken. She is Tethys Τηθύς, (from τηθη or τισθη, mamma,) the nurse as well as the mother of the lower animation, or the “moving and creeping things in the waters that have life,” and which “God commanded her to bring forth abundantly.”\*

Traces may be discovered in the Greek poets, and in the earliest Greek physical writers, of almost every leading fact in the successive order of the six periods,—the separation of the land from the waters—the appearance of the lights in the firmament, and the appointment of them for signs and seasons. Of this latter, the notices are frequent, and sometimes expressed in terms whose resemblance to the Mosaic language is striking and unmistakable. We need only refer the reader to the example quoted in a previous chapter from the astronomical poet Aratus. So, also, in a well known part of the Greek Mythology, Kronos (or Chronos) is the son of Uranus, and succeeds him in the kingdom. In the Latin myth there is the same relation between Saturn and Coelus. Translate the Greek genealogy and it would read, *Time* the son of *Heaven*. It certainly looks very much like a mythical representation of the great Mosaic fact, that time (that is, regular measurable time) began from the ordinances or appointment of the heavenly bodies, on the fourth day, when “their *dominion* was set up in the earth.” Can we doubt, too, which is the oldest here, the great supernatural fact, as it is given in

\* So, also, Cicero De Nat. Deor. Lib. I, 10,—Thales enim Milesius qui primus de talibus rebus quaesivit, *aquam* dixit esse initium rerum; Deum autem eam mentem quae ex aqua cuncta fingeret.

the Bible, or the mythical idea as it presents itself in the Greek mythology?

But not to weary the reader with numerous references, it may be enough to set forth somewhat more fully the account given by Diodorus Siculus in his history, and by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*. Both of these, it is true, are late writers. They aim, however, to give us the oldest Greek ideas of cosmogony, but in such a way as shows that they must have had some fuller, and, at the same time, more specific traditions than could have been derived solely from Hesiod. Whether they came from Sanchoniatho, or from some writings of greater authenticity than the fragments which are ascribed to him, is of little consequence. There can be no doubt of their oriental source, or of their wonderful agreement with the main aspects of the Mosaic account. The historian Diodorus presents us first the question which prevailed in the ancient world, whether the human race were eternal or had had a birth and a beginning in time. From the most ancient men (*ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχαιοτάτων*) this he says was the account handed down—"In the beginning the earth and heaven had one consistence, one idea. Nature was a mingled mass. Afterwards the kosmos received the order which it now possesses by means of the *separation* of substances from each other. The fiery rose first to the higher places. The atmosphere received a constant state and motion. By the separation of the waters the earthy slime acquired consistency and gravity. The sun and other heavenly bodies, on the other hand, being of a fiery nature, rose in the firmament and shared in the universal rolling of the kosmos. Next follows the process of vegetation, then the birth of the animal races—

and finally man makes his appearance upon the earth.”\* The whole account, which we have epitomized rather than closely translated, concludes with the quotation from the fragment of the Melanippus of Euripides which has been already given, and where this idea of *separation* is so prominently put forth.

The commencement of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* is more remarkable, and deserves a more minute examination. It is commonly said that he took his cosmology from the Greek poets, but there is more here than we find in Hesiod, or in anything that can be claimed as belonging to the Orphic age. Hesiod is confused; here is a striking order. The Greek poet is predominantly, and, we may say, wholly physical; the theism of Ovid is not only clear, but lofty. Hesiod presents us, now and then, with separate features of the Mosaic account; the Roman poet astonishes us by his wonderful agreement with that *order of events* which is the grand peculiarity of the Bible cosmology. We might take the language of Genesis verse by verse, and almost paraphrase it by corresponding expressions from Ovid, which, although more full in their poetical redundance, yet present a remarkable resemblance, not only in general significance, but in etymological imagery.

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And the earth was without form and void,”—  
*inanis et vacua.*

Dii coeptis (nam vos mutastis et illas)  
Aspirate meis; *primumque ab origine mundi*  
Ad mea perpetuum deducite tempora carmen.  
Ante\* mare et tellus, et quod tegit omnia, coelum,  
Unus erat toto naturae vultus in orbe,

Quem dixere *Chaos* ; rudis indigestaque moles  
 Nec quicquam nisi pondus iners, congestaque eodem  
 Non bene junctarum discordia semina rerum.\*

“And darkness was upon the face of the abyss.”

Quaque fuit tellus, illic et pontus et aer ;  
 Sic erat instabilis tellus, innabilis unda,  
*Lucis egens aer.* Nulli sua forma manebat.†

“And God said, let there be light, and there was light.  
 And God divided the light from the darkness.”

Et liquidum spisso secrevit ab aere coelum.  
 Quae postquam evolvit caecoque exemit acervo,  
 Dissociata locis *concordi pace* ligavit.‡

“And God said, let there be a firmament, (or sky,) in  
 the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from  
 the waters — or the fluids from the fluids.”

Ignea convexi vis et sine pondere coeli  
 Emicuit summaque locum sibi legit in arce.  
 Proximus est aer illi, levitate locoque.§

— Circumfluis humor

Ultima possedit, solidumque coeruit orbem.

\* “In the beginning the sea, and land, and the all-covering  
 heaven, was all one appearance of nature throughout the whole  
 world ; which they called *Chaos*, a rude and indigested mass.  
 There was nought but inactive weight and the inharmonious  
 seeds of ill-joined things all heaped together.”

† “Wherever there was land, there too was air and sea.  
 There was no standing on the land, no swimming in the water.  
 The atmosphere was without light. Nothing retained any  
 permanent form.”

‡ “He separated the clear heaven from the thick air ; which  
 after he had brought out and taken from the dark heap, he  
 bound together in harmonious peace.”

§ “The fiery force of the heaven, being convex and without  
 weight, sprang forth and took its place in the highest arc. The  
 air is next in lightness and position. The circumfluent water  
 took possession of the lower region and confined the solid  
 globe.” The reader will see how the Latin poet attempts to  
 philosophize. Moses contents himself with the mighty super-  
 natural *fact*

“And God said, let the waters which are under the sky be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear (or be seen). And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters he called seas.”

Sic ubi dispositum, quisquis fuit ille Deorum,  
Congeriem *secuit*, sectamque in membra redegit,  
Principio terram, ne non equalis ab omni  
Parte foret, magni speciem glomeravit in orbis,  
Tum freta diffundi rapidisque tumescere ventis,  
*Jussit* et, ambitae circumdare litora terrae.\*

“And let the dry land appear.”

*Jussit* et extendi campos, subsidere valles,  
Fronde tegi silvas, lapidosos surgere montes.†

“And God said—Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens.” The language of Genesis gives the impression that this was phenomenal, or it represents the *appearance* of the heavenly bodies, and not their absolute creation. In Ovid the phenomenal idea is unmistakable. The sun and stars which had been *hidden* in the chaos now shine forth.

Vix ea limitibus dissepserat omnia certis;  
Cum, quae pressa diu massa *latuere* sub illa  
Sidera, coeperunt toto effervescere coelo.

The periods of vegetation and of animal life, are

\* “When it was thus disposed, he *divided* the mass (whoever of the Gods it was) and then reduced it to its parts. In the first place he rolled up the land in the shape of a great globe, lest it should not be equal in every part. Then he ordered the seas to be spread abroad, and swell with the rapid winds, and draw a shore quite round the enclosed earth.”

† “Then he commanded the plains to be spread abroad, the vallies to sink, the woods to be covered with foliage, and the granite mountains to arise.”

‡ “Scarcely had he thus separated all things by fixed boundaries, when the stars which had lain *hid* for a long time under that mass of chaos, began to glow all over heaven.”

barely touched upon, but the introduction of man at the close of the description is truly sublime.

Terra feras cepit; volucres agitabilis aer,  
Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altae  
Deerat adhuc, et quod dominari in caetera posset.\*

Creation was unfinished. There was yet wanting an animal of a *holier*, that is, a more *separate* nature, and who might exercise dominion over the rest. Whilst others went bending down with their faces to the earth, there was demanded one that could lift its eye to heaven, and gaze upon the stars. Thus, *Man was born*,—

“Natus homo est,”

in the image of the all-ruling divinities.

Finxit inæffigiem; moderantum cuncta Deorum,  
Pronaque cum spectant animalia caetera terram  
Os homini sublime dedit; calumque tueri  
Jussit, et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus.

The passage is well known, but no triteness can ever detract from its pure sublimity, or the force with which it reminds the reader of the Scriptural account of the reasons and manner of the human origin.

\* “The earth received its beasts, the volatile air its birds. One more divine was wanting yet, of wider, deeper soul, and born to rule the rest.”



## CHAPTER XXIV.

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### ANCIENT IDEA OF CREATION AS A GENESIS OR GROWTH.

THE IDEA OF A GENESIS HELD BY THE ANCIENT THEISTS.—CONSISTENT WITH THE BELIEF IN A DIVINE WORK.—ARISTOTLE.—PLATO.—ANAXAGORAS.—THE FATHERS.—AUGUSTINE.—GENESIS THE NAME GIVEN IN THE SEPTUAGINT.—THE JEWISH NOTION OF A GROWTH OR NATURE.—HEBREW WORDS OF GENERATION, THE SACRED WRITERS FOND OF REPRESENTING THE WORLD AS A BIRTH.—ARE THESE EXPRESSIONS METAPHORS?—IF METAPHORS, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE GROWN OUT OF MODERN IDEAS

IN connection with what has been said respecting the old cosmogonies, it may be well to offer a few thoughts on the ancient idea of creation generally, and the difference between it and the more modern conception of instantaneous or very rapid production from a previous state of non-existence, with few or no intervening media. The ancient view, even when it was theistic, or took in the belief of a divine work, still inclined every where to the idea of a growth, a *genesis*, or generation, a birth, a coming out of one thing from another, or the becoming of one thing from another, through a series of what may be called natural causalities. It was not exactly the view that modern science would connect with the terms cause and effect; yet still there were prominent in it those ideas of generation or growth which we cannot well separate from the thought of natural production, however affected by a supernatural energy. The present world was a φύσις, —it grew—it was born—it came from something antecedent, not merely as a cause, but as its seed, embryo, or principium.

Along with this there might be also held, and was held, the notion of a divine origin, more or less distinct, according to the more or less pious state of the mind that entertained it. If we go to the two great schools of philosophy, it is well known that Aristotle held to an eternal unoriginated causality, whilst Plato gave to the universe a distinct theistic origin, yet still through a genesis or generation. His world was a Ζῶον, a *living thing*, and also a natural production. It was born, and grew. Anaxagoras regarded Νοῦς, or Mind, as the Principium, but then it made the world, and kept the world in order through forces, and elements, and causalities. It generated the elements and the primary powers of nature, and then employed them in the composition and regulation of the secondary bodies, or systems. This duality of idea belonged to the common mind,—at least, to all thinking minds, whether philosophers, or not. We see the two elements of it in the early words Κόσμος and φύσις, both used to denote the world,—the one implying order, harmony, thought, in a word, mind,—the other, growth, birth, causation, which are only other names for natural or mediate production.

In the Greek philosophy,—we mean the best Greek philosophy, the Stoic and Platonic, in distinction from the Epicurean,—or in the philosophy which prevailed in the world at the coming of Christianity, and which more or less affected the minds of the earliest Christian Fathers, these ideas of a growth or genesis were predominant. The Fathers say distinctly that the universe, that is the matter of the universe, came from nothing by the fiat of God. They regarded themselves as held to such a view both from reason and the Scripture. But

this did not preclude them from maintaining, along with it, these generative ideas of creation, and especially in respect to the present world. Hence, as we have seen, Augustine does not hesitate to call the creative periods *natures*; as when he speaks of the evening being the termination of one nature, and the morning the commencement of another. So, also, Plato held to matter being produced somehow, and somewhere, in time and space; otherwise his great argument that soul must be older than matter has no force.

But creation itself was a making of worlds, not necessarily an origination of matter. No man can read Augustine without being struck with the difference between his language and the phraseology that has grown out of the more modern conceptions. And so of the other Fathers. We may say, too, that with all their fondness for the startling supernatural, a similar mode of thinking was more or less familiar to the Hebrews. Modern thinking is inclined to the other extreme, to regard all before the Adamic period as supernatural, without a recognition of growth or nature, unless by the briefest steps, and all succeeding the creation of man as wholly or mainly natural. The old Hebrew mind, on the other hand, freely introduced each class of events into each period. The writers of the Bible speak of the *generation* of the heavens and the earth, as they speak of the *generations* of the Patriarchs; whilst in the flood, in the passage of the Red Sea, in the descent upon Sinai, and in all the extraordinary events that mark the Jewish history, there is the same supernatural power, both in mode and essence, that built the firmament, and divided the land from the waters. In fact, it is the mixture of the two,

this distinct recognition of the natural and supernatural — of God's direct power and a course of nature — that forms the leading feature of the Old Testament view of the world. It was the great wheel, and the wheel within a wheel of Ezekiel's vision; but, then, there was a Living Spirit not only *in* the wheel, but separate from and above the wheels, — a “voice from the firmament that was *over* the heads of the *Living Creatures* when they stood and let down their wings.”\* In such a recognition of nature, we have a full security against pantheism. The Ruah Elohim, — both in creation and providence, — is at the same time ψυχὴ ἐγκοσμία and ψυχὴ ὑπερκοσμία. It is in nature, and at the same time *before* nature and *above* nature.

We see the wide-spread ancient idea in the name given in the Septuagint, or Greek version, to the first book of the Bible. They called it *Genesis*, βιβλος γενέσεως οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς, *Generatiónes coeli et terrae*, (*Vulgate*), *The Book of the Generation of the world*; and there is much in the fact that such a name did not at all shock the pious Jews who lived when that version was made, and who used it so extensively in their synagogues. It did not offend their own belief, or the view they entertained in respect to the belief of their ancestors. And why should they have been shocked, since in the very beginning of their own venerated Hebrew book there was a word of the same radical idea, employed not merely of human genealogies, but in reference to the very creation itself? In the expression rendered the *generations of the heavens and the earth*, the Hebrew word is הַיְוָמֵינוּ, from a root signifying to be *beget*, to *generate*, to *give*

\* Ezekiel, i, 25.

*birth*, precisely as the Greek root from whence comes the word *genesis*, and the Latin from whence our word *nature*. The Latin, the Greek, the Hebrew word, are exact equivalents, both in their etymological conception of growth or birth, and their derived applications to the human and mundane organizations.

But the idea is not confined to the usage of this root. We meet with it in other parts of the Bible, and as expressed by other Hebrew words of generation. We may even say it is a favorite method thus to set forth the origin and subsequent history of the world as a birth and growth, or in other words—a *nature*. The Hebrew writers do not seem to think such language inconsistent with, but rather to magnify, the divine glory. To say that it is poetical is a very inadequate explanation of the philological fact. It never would have been in the language of poetry had it not had some previous deep ground in the human conception. Would such metaphors, if they may be called metaphors, have grown out of that mode of thinking which we have characterized as the modern in distinction from the Greek, the Patristic, and the Jewish? “Before the mountains were *born* or thou hadst *brought to the birth* the earth and the world, from everlasting unto everlasting thou art, O God,” Psalms, xc, 2. Both the Hebrew verbs here belong to the class of which we have been speaking. They are both verbs of generation. The first, יָלַד, is the one on which we have already commented, and from which comes the noun employed, Genesis, ii, 4, to denote those successive steps in the creative history of the world that are there called “the generations of the heavens and the earth.” It represents the mountains as having *grown* like the

foetus or embryo in the womb. The other verb, ܠܚܝܢܐ, our translators have generalized. Its sense, however, of generation or birth is well established, both in the active and passive forms. Taken here as the second person of the active, it would have the meaning we have given it, and as we find it used, Psalms, xxix, 9, Job, xxxix, 4, Isaiah, lvii, 2, Deuteronomy, xxxii, 18, where it is applied to the action of Deity, and Proverbs, xxv, 23, where it is directly used to denote natural causation, and should be rendered, “the north wind *generates*, or *gives birth* to the rain.” The Syriac rendering of Psalms, xc, 2, is literally, “before the mountains were *carried in the womb*, or even the earth *was born*.” In the same manner does the Septuagint translate it by the corresponding Greek word of generation, or natural production, πρὸ τοῦ ὄρη γενηθῆναι, before the *genesis* of the mountains. From a similar conception of generative causality came such expressions as we have, Job, xxxviii, 28,—“Who hath *begotten* the drops of the dew? From what womb came forth the cold, and the frost of heaven who hath gendered it?” The Hebrew verbs here have the same etymological meaning, or image, that we have found in those corresponding Latin and Greek roots from whence have come our scientific and philosophical language. We might render the verses in what would seem the coldest or most prosaic dialect of the schools, and yet the radical phenomenal sense would remain unchanged. “What *cause* hath generated the drops of the dew? What is the *genesis* of the cold, and the frost of heaven, whence has it its *nature*?” The images are still there. They abide as firmly in our Latin Anglo-Saxon word nature, as in the Hebrew terms which we pronounce poetical

because their primary pictures have never faded away in any scientific use.

We find all these roots not simply in poetry, but in the soberest prose, the prose of the Mosaic narrative. Unless, therefore, we are prepared to call all descriptive language poetical, the question still remains, whence came such figures? Or, if we insist upon the other name, whence such poetical usage? It may seem easily answered after we have become familiar with the *usus loquendi*. Frequent repetition makes it appear very natural. But the more one reflects, the more will he see the difficulty of accounting for it except on the ground that the earliest men took a view of creation, or of the world's origin, birth and growth, quite different from that which prevails in our *most* modern theology. Such metaphors never would have grown naturally out of that twenty-four hour hypothesis which is so pertinaciously maintained by those who style themselves the literal interpreters. It was the conception of a nature, and yet not nature simply. To the Jewish mind, especially, it was the Divine power working through nature,—that is, through those methods and processes in which one event (*e-venio*) seems to *come out* of another, and to which, therefore, we rightly give the name *nature*, γένεσις, הוֹלֵלֵה, so uniform in its radical conception, however remote the languages through which it travels down to us.

In accordance with this mode of thinking and conceiving, not only the Greek theistic philosophers, but the Christian Fathers, many of them, would not have hesitated, and did not hesitate to call the world γενητός, and creation γένεσις, though the latter were driven afterwards, in the Nicene controversy, to make the very proper and

necessary distinction between generation in time, and the eternal generation of the Logos, the "First Born before all creation." But we have here to do with the conception itself, and the influence it had upon their language and their thinking. By tracing these words, we find that this conception was as old and as well established in the Hebrew as in the Greek. We have before seen that there is the same primary idea of growth and birth in the Latin *creo*, *creatio*, and hence in our own familiar yet loosely interpreted word.



## CHAPTER XXV.

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### ANTIQUITY OF THE LOGOS.

INTERPRETATION OF PROVERBS, VIII, AND MICAH, V, 1.

CREATION THE GRAND EPIC OF HEBREW POETRY.—ANTIQUITY OF WISDOM.—PROVERBS, VIII.—IS IT A PERSONIFICATION?—LANGUAGE OF PAUL IN COLOSSIANS.—TRANSLATION OF PROVERBS, VIII.—INTERPRETATION.—THE DESIGN OF THE PASSAGE.—TO SET FORTH GREAT ANTIQUITY.—THE “HIGHEST PART OF THE DUST OF THE WORLD.”—WISDOM REJOICES IN CREATION.—REJOICES EXCEEDINGLY IN THE CREATION OF MAN.—INTERPRETATION OF MICAH, V, 1.—PSALM CX.—THE WORD OLAM.—TIME IN THE BIBLE AS DISTINGUISHED FROM ETERNITY.—TIME MEASURES.—DIFFICULT PROBLEM.—RASHNESS OF SCIENCE.

HITHERTO we have been mainly occupied with the narrative in Genesis; but, as has been remarked before, creation is the grand event of the Hebrew poetry. The Psalms, the Prophets, the Proverbs, and the Book of Job, abound in allusions to it. In short, it is one of the chief store-houses of their poetical imagery. It is of the utmost importance, then, to get a right view of the manner in which it impressed the minds of the Hebrew writers themselves. It is the true way to get rid of any wrong modern prepossessions, if we have any.

Among extended passages having a most suggestive bearing on our main question, we would refer especially to what is said of the “going forth” and antiquity of Wisdom, Proverbs, viii, 22–32. This portion of Scripture is very remarkable on several accounts. The older commentators and theologians understood it generally of the Eternal Word, or of the eternal going forth of the

Logos,—the same who is said, John, i, 14, to “have become flesh and dwelt among ‘us.’” Many of the moderns have rejected this view. But let the reader carefully examine Colossians, i, 15–20, John, i, 3, Hebrews, i, 2, 3, and ask himself, where did these writers get their doctrine of the Creative Word, or Logos? From inspiration, it may be said. Most true, indeed; but can we doubt the channel of that inspiration? When we compare the similarity of language and idea, can we hesitate to believe that Paul had in mind both the spirit and letter of this and similar passages from the Old Testament, in what he says of “Him who is the First Born, or born before all creation, who is the image of the unseen God, and *in* whom, and *through* whom, were all things created, both in heaven and earth, both the *seen* and the *unseen*?”\*

\* On this question, so germane to our principal subject, we can only throw together here what might be deemed the heads of a more extended argument. Among these may be mentioned,

1st. The antiquity of the idea. In the fragments of oldest theologizing that have come down to us, we find this thought of a Word, Logos, Wisdom, or Nous, as something divine, yet intervening between Deity and the world. We trace it in myths, in early mystic hymns, in the religious books of ancient nations, especially of Persia and India. It makes its appearance in the profoundest philosophy of a later period, and finally is fully confirmed by the Gospel revelation. Some of the professedly older writings in which we find it, may be spurious, but even this is evidence of an early reality.. The imitation implies an original of some kind.

2d. The demand of the reason, or the need we have of such a thought to avoid the extreme of atheism, or of a pantheism in which God is identified with the universe.

3d. Intimations in the First of Genesis, and in some other parts of the Old Testament, which might very easily give rise to the idea in a thoughtful Hebrew mind,—such as the going

But even taking it as a personification of the Architectonal Wisdom and its everlasting outgoings, it has the same important bearing upon the main view that has been presented respecting the creative days or periods.

forth of the Word in creation, and that expression of plurality in the divine existence, or at least of duality, Genesis, i, 26, which has never been satisfactorily explained on any other idea—"Let us make man in our image."

4th. The earliest Jewish interpretations of such passages, and especially of this extended one in Proverbs, are all in favor of such a view. The expressions in the Targums are consistent only with the idea of a real hypostasis, and not a mere figure of speech. Under this head may be cited Ecclesiasticus, or the Book of Sirach, Ch. xxiv. This book is apocryphal, but it certainly gives us the then Jewish view of the Eighth of Proverbs, of which it is an evident imitation. The writer manifestly alludes to the going forth of the Word in Genesis, and besides, identifies Wisdom with the Angel of the Presence that accompanied the Children of Israel in the wilderness. Here, too, referéce might be made to the apocryphal Book of Enoch, which is certainly older than the Christian Era. It contains this doctrine of the Logos most distinctly, and in language which shows that the writer must have derived it from an interpretation of this very passage,—*Electus et Occultus coram eo antequam creabatur mundus, et usque ad secula seculorum*,—"The Elect and the concealed one existed in his presence before the world was created and for worlds of worlds." See the edition of Bishop Laurence, Ch. xlviii, and remarks, page 225. Compare, also, with this the other apocryphal book entitled the Wisdom of Solomon, Ch. vii, 22, etc. An examination of such passages shows that Philo might easily have obtained his doctrine of the Logos from Jewish writings without any necessity of resorting for it to Plato.

5th. To call it a personification settles nothing. If there is meant by the word a mere figure of speech, the answer is that such figurative personification is not to be found elsewhere in the Jewish writings. Inanimate objects are frequently apostrophized, but such personification of a divine attribute, especially in the *first person*, is utterly without any other

In setting forth the passage, the reader will see wherein we slightly depart from the common version. For the sense given to the first Hebrew verb, קנה, he may consult the references at the close of the long note, and especially, Genesis, xiv, 19, 22, iv, 1, in the latter of which passages it is applied to the first recorded human birth. The whole may be rendered thus. "The Lord possessed

example in the sacred writings. The later Greek poetry thus represents moral and intellectual qualities as persons; but no where in the Old Testament do we find the divine attributes of Justice, Mercy, Goodness, Wisdom, (unless this is an example,) thus set forth as personally acting, much less are they ever presented in that boldest style of directly speaking in the first person.

6th. To two arguments of Prof. Stuart, it may be replied, that the Hebrew verb קנה (rendered *he possessed* me) is strictly a word of generation. For proof, see Genesis, iv, 1, Deuteronomy, xxxii, 6, where it is synonymous with father, Psalms, cxxxix, 13, where the whole context will allow of no other sense, and the remarkable passage, Genesis, xiv, 19, 22, which should be rendered the "Generator of the Heavens and the Earth," in accordance with the idea on which we have so much insisted, that in the ancient mind creation is regarded as a *birth* or *genesis* from a previous state. Besides, the creation of an *attribute* is utterly unmeaning. To the other objection of Prof. Stuart, that the Hebrew word הוֹלִיֵּיתִי (rendered *brought forth*, Proverbs, viii, 23,) is used alone in respect to the female or maternal nature, it may be replied by citing such passages as Psalms, xxix, 9, xc, 2, and others. Another answer is furnished by the fact that the same objection, if it have any weight at all, is applicable to the Greek πρωτόστοκος as used by Paul, and applied to the Logos, Colossians, i, 18. The root of that term is almost universally employed in the same way. But the conclusive reply is that the whole objection is addressed to a weak, human prejudice, and has no force in respect to the mysterious idea of the divine sonship. It would have been just as well to have derived an argument from the grammatical feminine form of the Greek and Hebrew words for wisdom.

me as his own, or only Begotten, the Beginning of his ways, before his works of old. From eternity was I anointed, away before the beginning—the beginning of the antiquities of the earth. When there were no chaoses was I born, before there were any deeps swelling with waters,—before the mountains were settled—before the hills *was I born*. When he had not made the earth, or the parts beyond, or the very beginning of the dust of the world. When he prepared the heavens I was there; when he established the skies above, when he made strong the fountains of the deep, when he made a law for the sea, even when he ordained the supports of the earth. I was ever with him like an only child,—*day—day*—was I his delight, rejoicing ever before Him. Glad was I in the orb of his earth, but my great joy was with the Sons of Adam.”

“In the beginning of his ways,” says our version, but there is no preposition here, as there is when the same word is used, Genesis, i, 1, nor any demand of the sense to supply it. Wisdom was the beginning itself, the First Out-going, the Eternally Born, the Beginning of his ways, the Beginning which had no other beginning, the ἀρχὴ τῶν ἀρχῶν, or Principium principiorum. In verse 30th, we have rendered the Hebrew יָמַנָּה according to the spirit of our translation; the word denoting *nurture* and thus sonship. This agrees well, too, with the general scope of the passage. And yet the arguments are strong in favor of another rendering given in all the old versions. The Septuagint translation is ἀρμόζουσα, *making harmonious*, the Vulgate, *cuncta componens*. The Syriac has a word that means *arranger* or *artificer*; being the participle of the verb which the Peschito employs in trans-

lating, Hebrews, xi, 3, where our version rightly renders it, "the worlds *were framed*."

But before making particular remarks on the translation of single terms, it may be well to call attention to what is strongly conceived to be the governing soul of the whole passage. We do not look here for scientific accuracy. The conceptions are very much the same as in the Mosaic account, and we could expect no other than such as might belong to a thoughtful Hebrew mind in the days of Solomon. The First of Genesis seems to have been vividly in the writer's mind, although there is not preserved the same orderly method that there makes the principal feature. The design was different; and the evidence of this gives rise to a feeling of a peculiar kind that does not so much affect us in that more methodical narrative. This design here is to set forth exceeding antiquity, even the eternity of the Logos. The writer might, perhaps, have expressed this at once, in a single proposition conveyed in abstract terms, had the Hebrew furnished him with any such. He chooses, however, to take a more effective method by employing vivid conceptions, which although ever seeming to terminate in the finite, do, in fact, carry us farther towards or into the infinite than any such word as *infinite* itself, or any abstract terms, however logically perfect, could ever have done. We ascend continually and rapidly by a series of the most sublime climaxes, until our idea of what is still above is unutterably exalted by the conception of the immeasurable times and spaces we have left below. We are carried back, and still farther back,—away to the ante-adamic state,—away back to the creative period, and into the creative period. And when we

are there, there is the same going back, and farther back, as we continually recede from stage to stage, and from period to period, until the mind is lost in the thought of that wholly ante-mundane state when Wisdom was alone with God,—the First Born before all creation. Before, the beginning of the antiquities of the earth, מִקְדָּמֵי אֶרֶץ, the periods that preceded the finishing of the earth, before the mountains were settled, before even the hills or first swelling mounds began to be raised on the terrestrial surface,—when there was no sea, no sky, no chaos, no deeps,—was I born. And now we ascend or recede into a region still more immensely remote,—“When he had not made the earth” at all, or the “spaces abroad beyond the earth,” or the very “beginning of the dust (or elementary matter) of the world.” We are carried far beyond the time even when the earth was Tohu and Bohu, and darkness was upon the face of the waters.

But we must justify our translation here. With all respect for our common version, it may be said that it has failed in this verse. Its rendering is, “The earth and the fields and the highest part of the dust of the world.” It is not so much inaccurate as wanting in distinctness. Some have thought that the last expression referred to the hills, or mountain tops, as the highest part of the globe; but that would be a repetition and an inversion, moreover, of the order elsewhere observed, which is from the superficial, or obvious, to the more remote, or what is supposed to be the more remote, in time or causation. It would, too, wholly destroy the climax. The earth, and the fields, and the hills,—this cannot be the true order of the conception. The word here rendered *fields*, has no where else any such appli-

cation. It is from a very common root signifying *without* or *abroad*, (*foras*,) or that which is without. No other Hebrew word could have supplied its place in expressing such an idea of parts or places beyond the earth. It may mean here the air, but still the order requires that it be something off the earth, beyond the earth, or, at least, of a more elemental nature than the common matter of the earth in its present state. The word תֵּבֵל (tebel) we have shown in a previous chapter (page 53) to be of a wider significance than earth; although it is sometimes used for it, or even for the habitable part of it; just as we also sometimes employ our word *world* in a similar limited sense. It is the kosmos, or visible mundane sphere, or "all under the heaven." It is the round world, corresponding to the Latin *tellus* rather than *terra*, and having the same radical conception with our Saxon word *world*, from *whirl*, *whorl*, or *roll*.\* The word עֵלִי, rendered highest, is not used of altitude. When taken tropically, it is a word of time, order, or origin, but not of space. Its primary sense, the head, may be employed, as in other languages, for beginning or principium, and with this meaning it is the root of the first word in Genesis. It is thus, as expressive of order rather than of space, the very term, of all others, a thinking philosophic Hebrew would have been led to employ, had he wished to express what the Greeks in their philosophy would style an ἀρχή, and the Latins a principium or *first principle* of things. The word עֲקָרִית, too, or

\* The same conception is expressed in Hebrew by גַּלְגַּל, a *wheel*; as in Psalms, lxxvii, 19, "The voice of thy thunder is in *galgal* (the arch or vault of heaven), thy lightnings lit up the *tebel*, the earth stood in awe and trembled."



*dust*, is remarkable for being the very one which modern science has applied to its nebular elementary matter. It calls it *star dust*. We would not insist upon any such mere coincidence as that; but there are some other things about the word which are well worth our attention. The plural form which is quite unusual,\* seems taken here to separate it from its common applications. In this way it becomes of all other Hebrew words, the best adapted to present the thought of the first or most elementary matter—"the beginning of the dust of the world."

And now to think of measuring all this by six solar days of twenty-four hours! Could the writer have had it in his mind? There is, indeed, grandeur in the thought of sudden and rapid exercises of supernatural power; but is it the kind of grandeur which the passage aims to express? We are speaking now merely of its rhetorical effect, its leading thought, its designed impression. This is not rapidity, nor striking display, nor great strength even, but *antiquity*. The writer is striving to make us feel how old, how very old, this uncreated Wisdom is. He is taxing his utmost powers of language to show how inconceivably ancient, beyond all finite measures, beyond all finite visible things, was the birth of the Logos; the Beginning of the ways of God. Let us endeavor then, as far as possible, to receive into our minds this conception of vast antiquities, of antiquities going back of antiquities, not only to the preadamite period, but away into it—stage after stage—period after period—beyond the

\* We think there is but one other example of the plural in the Scriptures, and that is Job, xxviii, 6, where it is applied in a like chemical or elementary manner to the metallic ore.

antiquities of the present earth—beyond the running streams—beyond the swelling mountains and even the first rising hills—beyond the dark world of waters—beyond the time when light first shone upon it—before the Spirit brooded over the abyss—before the chaos—before the material principium—before the very beginning of “the dust of the world,” the very hyle or elemental matter of the round universe. Can it be that the writer really had in his minds eye a view which limited all this to a few centuries before his own birth, and what is still more inconceivable, confined by far the greater and the grander part of these continually expanding antiquities to the space of six solar days? Is it at all consistent with such an intended impression of antiquity, that while the briefest and least important part of this imagery should carry us back three thousand years to the creation of man,\* all the rest, so labored and so expanded,

\* If it be said that these three thousand years, or thereabouts, would seem like a great antiquity to the writer, because it came to his mind through a chronological waste, the answer is easy. The Jewish chronology was no such waste. Every step in the road, almost, was marked out. There were mile stones all the way up. The Jew acquainted with his Scriptures, was as familiar with its remotest terminus as with the parts nearest to himself. In thought, in conception, he was as near to Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham, as we are to the Pilgrim Fathers. No people ever surpassed the Israelites in the regularity of their chronology. Whether the measurement were real or fictitious (and with respect to the conception this makes no difference) the whole duration from Solomon to Adam is filled up with dates and events presenting an almost unbroken series. There is nothing else like it in the ancient world. If it be true, then, that conceptions of time are rendered more familiar by such filling up, especially if it be with genealogies of our own near kindred, then to Solomon the thirty centuries to the creation, as so regularly given in his

should take us no farther back of that than six times twenty-four hours? We say nothing of the entire silence respecting the short solar days, which would certainly be very remarkable if the writer had believed in them, or had them in his mind, but we ask again,—Would not the very supposition cause the whole animated passage to collapse and empty itself of all that power which the dullest reader must feel that it possesses.

What shows, too, that the writer's mind is on these old pre-adamite periods is the language of the subsequent verses. During these successive stages, Wisdom, or the Logos, was *with*\* God, delighting in them all. "I was His delight, *day, day*, (=*i* =*i*) rejoicing always before Him,—rejoicing in the *tebel*" (the mundus or *orbis terrarum*), rejoicing in the grand series of constructions through which the Earth and Heavens were finished, but with the greatest joy—expressed by an intensive plural—when the long periods of creation were terminating at last in the human race. "My exceeding great joy was with the Sons of Men." If our first view be correct,

Sacred Books, must have appeared much shorter than to us the conceived interval that carries us back to the growth of the Roman Empire. The correctness of these dates cannot affect our philological argument, which has only to do with the time-conceptions of the writer, and the question whether they would be in harmony with that idea of the vast antiquity of the Logos which he is laboring to give us through so many swelling climaxes. Did he mean to go back only three thousand years and six days, making one transition through the first interval, and then employing all this hyperbolical language to carry us through the second? The whole spirit of the passage rebels against the thought.

\* Hebrew *יְחַדָּשׁ*. Compare John, i, 1, πρὸς τὸν Θεόν—The Word was *with* God.

what a deep significance is given to these expressions by the fact that the Logos, whose antiquity is here set forth, afterwards "became flesh and dwelt among us," assuming our nature, being born as we are born, taking upon himself our very name Son of Man, and thus making himself the Goel, the near kinsman, the Redeemer of those whom he had so "loved before the foundations of the world."

In immediate connection with this we would cite the well known passage from the Prophet Micah, v, 1, which all Christians must of course regard as spoken of the Logos, or Son of God. "And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou art little among the thousands of Judah, from thee shall come forth to me He who is to be ruler in Israel, *whose outgoings are of old, from everlasting.*" All who hold that the passage in Proverbs, viii, refers to the Logos, will see a striking connection, and must believe that here are the same goings forth from eternity which are there more largely pictured. Yet, even aside from that, there may be claimed for this passage a bearing upon our main subject in consequence of its peculiar phraseology. What are these מוֹצְאוֹתָיִךְ, or *out-goings*? No other part of the Bible furnishes the answer but Genesis, i. They must be the same goings forth, or utterances, of the creative Word that are there so repeatedly recorded. And then comes another remarkable phrase whose peculiarity is hidden in our correct though too general translation—"Whose out-goings are from the antiquity (from the ante-mundane state) from the *days* of eternity," or "days of olam"—מִיְמֵי עוֹלָם. The author would be careful here, but the question comes up most naturally to the mind,—Is there an allusion in this place, as there

may have been in the *yom yom* of Proverbs, viii, to these same ante-adamic days? We know that the phrase may denote, by way of hyperbole, an ancient time upon the earth, and we have elsewhere treated specially of such applications, but in the few cases where that usage occurs the context makes clear the limited sense. Here, however, the reason for such explanation would be directly reversed. What is there here to forbid, what on the other hand is there which does not demand, that it should have the fullest sense to which the human power of conception can carry it—"the days of *olam*," the days which are spoken of as being before earthly solar days began?

We may venture to add to these the remarkable passage, Psalms, cx, 3, which is commonly rendered, "From the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth." About the Messianic character of this Psalm there can be no doubt. It is fixed by Christ himself, and is clearly applied by him (Matthew, xxii, 42, 45,) to that mysterious pre-existence which made him the "Lord as well as the son of David." We may regard it, therefore, as treating of the same Eternal One whose ancient outgoings are mentioned in Micah, v, 1, and Proverbs, viii, 24. What more likely then, than that here, too, there should be a reference to the Eternal Generation, with a like allusion to the creative days, and especially the first *morning* of our world as a term of exceeding antiquity, or the remotest date of the mundane existence. In the word מִבֹּרֵן, the preposition has with good reason been regarded as comparative, but it may have this sense in reference to *time*, rather than to number, or abundance, as some would take it. It may, therefore, be rendered "From

the womb," that is, "before the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth," or thy *nativity*. The word rendered *morning* denotes in its most usual form, the earliest dawn, *tempus ante auroram, primum diluculum* (*Gesenius*), the first beams of light. The reader is referred to Amos, iv, 3, Job, xxxviii, 12, Genesis, xix, 15, Psalms, lvii, 9, Hosea, vi, 3, etc. Hence it comes to be used for any earliest date or period of time. The root טָהַר, has also that same radical idea of *fissure*, of *cleaving, parting, breaking forth*, which we found in the corresponding word in Genesis, and in Chapter cxiii of the Koran, and which, in fact, belongs to all the Semitic words of this class. We might, therefore, without any violence, paraphrase it, "Before the *birth* of nature thou hadst thy generation; before the first morning of the world thou hadst the early dew\* of thy nativity." It

\* Hebrew טֵל. To make this word represent numerousness, the allusion is supposed to be to the drops of the dew—

The numerous drops of morning dew—

as Watt's has paraphrased it. But it is itself a term of generation. The idea of abundance, in all the examples quoted by Gesenius, it has, not from the image of innumerable dew drops, but from its own innate sense of fertility. It is closely connected with the conception of germination. Hence the very peculiar expression, Isaiah, xxvi, 19, "the dew of herbs," in that remarkable reference to the resurrection, when, according to Paul's image, the bodies that have been *sown* in the earth shall live and rise again. The Vulgate there renders it *ros lucis*, the *dew of light*, as though the translator took אֵרוֹת for the feminine plural of the word for light. And, indeed, there is an intimate connection between the ideas, making it something higher and truer than a fancy, that the Hebrews called the flowers and plants by this name of *lights*, when they are first seen coming out of the earth. There is certainly a relationship between the ideas of light and germination, or the outgrowth of life, whether vegetable or animal,

is the same attempt to draw the mind to the idea of the absolute eternal through the necessary medium of a finite conception. But this finite conception must be as inconceivably remote as possible, and not lose its effect by carrying back the thought to events which are parted by only a few historical human generations from the stand point of both the writer and the reader. We think of the ἀπαύγασμα, the eternal ray, or outshining beam, as Paul calls the Logos, Hebrews, i, 3, and when it is said that this was before the birth of the world's first morning, or the first outshining of the natural light, it does not, indeed, make this latter date eternal, but still, if there would be any force in the comparison, must it draw it back to a distance towards itself which no known solar or cosmical times can measure. In what striking harmony with this the declaration that follows:—"Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek,"

when the new existence *awakes* and comes forth from the darkness and privation of nature. It is this connection of ideas that has ever made the germination of plants a favorite image of the resurrection, as in Job, xiv, 7, 1 Corinthians, xv, 37. So the root צמח, which in Hebrew has the sense of *budding, branching*, in Syriac means to *shine forth, or emit a splendor*; and hence the Syriac noun by which the Peschito translates the *beam*, or outshining, or "brightness of glory." Hebrews, i, 3.

It need only be further remarked that in the Syriac the word for child is cognate with this same root rendered *dew*, and hence the rendering of the Syriac translation of Psalms, cx, 3,—“As a child have I begotten thee.” From the same root comes a Hebrew word for lamb; and this need not surprise us when we find the same analogy in the Greek.—Ἐβρησθη is used for the young of animals. Odyssey, ix, 222. Hence it is wrong to say that the ancient versions did not render this word for dew. It was understood in their words of generation.

a priest of olam—of an age or existence not measured by the sun. And hence we see the force of the Apostle's distinction between the regularly genealogized office of the sons of Aaron, with all its dates and successions, and this priesthood which "had neither beginning of days nor end of time." Hebrews, vii, 4.

The word *youth*, in Psalms, cx, 3, has been regarded as the abstract used for the concrete—juventus for juvenes—and understood of a numerous posterity, or the populousness of Messiah's kingdom. Nothing, however, would justify this but an exigency which does not here exist, because the other sense is so satisfying. The word properly means *birth*, or *nativity*, rather than youth, either as juvenis or juventus, and this is its sense, Ecclesiastes, xi, 9, 10, where it occurs in a somewhat remarkable connection with a derivative from the very word here joined with it—"even the *birth* and *earliest dawn* of human life are vanity." The Syriac translator, by taking this word as a verb, has brought out the rendering—"As a child have I *begotten* thee"—thus giving it a striking resemblance to Psalms, ii, 7. The Septuagint version is, "Before the *morning* star have I begotten thee,"—πρὸ ἑωσφόρου, the light that brings or foreruns the dawn. The Vulgate gives the same—Ex utero *ante luciferum* genui te." All these old versions regarded the word rendered morning as equivalent to בֶּן־צֶהֱרָה, used Isaiah, xiv, 12, and rendered *filius auroræ*, Son of the Morning. And here we cannot help remarking how beautifully one Scripture is found to harmonize with another. We have not seen it alluded to by any commentator, but can there be a doubt that St. John, in Revelations, xxii, 17, or the Sacred Person who



there speaks in vision, must be supposed to have reference to this very passage, and the idea given in these old versions. "I am the Root and the Offspring of David the bright and the Morning Star." The first part has an unmistakable reference to Christ's application of this Psalm to himself, Mathew, xxii, 45; can there be any doubt as to the true suggestion of the other?

We have spoken of the olamic days as belonging to the ante-time state. The word may seem mystical or unmeaning, and, therefore, demands an explanation. It is employed, then, to denote a period or periods of existence before the commencement of that measured duration to which we give the name of time, as regulated by the sun and heavenly bodies. Periods not thus measured have been styled olamic; and we think with the best logical and etymological reasons. The distinction is so important that we would beg the indulgence of our readers in entering upon a brief explanation of the word  $\text{עוֹלָם}$ , rendered so frequently eternity; and of which we have made so free a use in these pages. A difference between the thought conveyed by this word, and the common idea of time, seems certainly recognized in the Bible. But what is that difference? In examining it we would say, in the first place, there is the transcendental notion, which attempts wholly to exclude the thought of duration, and to maintain the reality of a state of being in which it has no place. Some would regard this as the anti-thesis of time. But in reference to such notion, all that we can say is, let the metaphysician, who thinks he clearly holds it, make the most of it. There may be a reality represented by it; but it does not fall within the human conceiving faculty. We may try ever so hard to realize it, but we

find a *law in our minds* which makes it absolutely impossible for us to think away from the conception of duration, or of time in its flowing sense.

But yet we do speak of time as opposed to eternity. We speak of its having a beginning, and of its coming to an end. There seems, too, in our minds, a solid ground for the thought. There are, moreover, passages of Scripture which speak of the present world under a Hebrew name that implies a contrast between the two states of being. They speak of the solar and celestial phenomena as in some way beginning the creation of time, or of time regarded as a state succeeding another and a previous state. Hence, too, the repeated phrases, *beneath the sun*, and *to see the sun*, as indicative of our present mundane being. In what, then, does this difference consist? There may be an absolute *olam* without flow or flowing duration. But that is only for the Divine Mind. It is to us inconceivable and ineffable. As far, therefore, as our conceptions are concerned, the difference—and it is a very wide one—must be this, that the one is measured by astronomical or cosmical signs, the other is unmeasured by any estimated *interior* divisions, although it may bear a quantitative relation to similar cosmical periods lying *without it*. In presenting this distinction the radical sense of the word leads us directly to the idea of which we are in search. The verb means to be *hidden*, and the derived noun in its primary sense signifies the concealed, the indefinite, the unknown, the *boundless*,—not so much that which cannot be measured or bounded, as that which, as matter of observed fact, is unbounded, and in this sense boundless. Among the places in which the root occurs we will cite one that

seems to us not only to set forth the radical meaning, but also to do this in connection with a simile than which we know of none that could be regarded as more vividly pictorial of this very difference. In Job, vi, 17, false friends are compared to streams swollen in the winter or cold rainy season, and dried up in the heats of summer when most wanted by the thirsty traveller. These swollen floods of winter, he says, "are dark by reason of the cold when the snow *hides itself* (חִבְּתָהֶן) upon them." It is a conjugation of this Hebrew verb; and not only the etymology but the picture is suggestive of our present thought. As the regular fast falling flakes of snow disappear in the dark wintry waters,

A moment white, then gone forever,

so do our regular measured times run into an unmeasured ocean of duration, just as in the past they may be conceived of as having come out of a similar dark and undivided reservoir\*. Olam, then, is hidden unmeasured duration. It is in contrast with regular time divided into regular periods, solar, lunar, stellar, diurnal, monthly, annual, centennial, millennial, all deduced from the celestial motions, and all thus dating from the time when the sun was ordained to "give light upon the earth, and to be for times, and for seasons, and for signs, and for days, and for years." If we may use a very common comparison, this arrangement in respect to the earth by

\* Another good example of such use of the verb may be found, Nahum, iii, 11, where it is applied in Niphal to the long buried and forgotten Nineveh.—"Thou shalt be hidden." The primary and derived senses seem to meet here in most expressive union. For an *age*, or *olam*, has she been *hidden*, until now Layard and others are bringing her up to light.

which it is brought under the dominion of measured time, or as we might say, the revolution on its axis by which it is all effected, is like putting on the strap or gearing that connects our wheel with the whole mundane machinery. Every day becomes such a portion of a year, every year of some great solar revolution, every such solar revolution an exact measured cycle in some millio-millennial movement about some other far distant centre. By connecting, moreover, our pendulums with the earth's rotation, and through this with the great outward movement, we get the smaller diurnal divisions of hours and minutes; and then, too, as has been said before, our own microcosmal organization gets in harmony with it, and we can not think out of it, and thus we become children of flowing time, or "men of Heled," as the Hebrew has it, Psalms, xvii, 14.

But we are pretty plainly taught in the Bible that such measured portions of duration are preceded by others of a different character, and to such we may give the name olamic. They are on each side of our time-measured world; and thus our own world, too, though having its interior temporal divisions, is itself an olam as compared with the adjacent cycles. It lies between them like an island, or an isthmus, between two unmeasured oceans.

In respect, however, to this definition of hidden or unmeasured, the geologist might perhaps object that the ante-adamic olams were actually measured, as truly, if not as regularly, as though it had been done by the celestial movements. They were measured by strata, he might affirm, or deposits. But by what regular laws of succession, or by what exact intervals determined by movements *out of themselves*, and which would remain

invariable notwithstanding all their changes? We look now upon these deposits, or upon the marks they have left, and they seem to imply succession and passing times. But how slow or how rapid? By what rule is this to be measured—we mean by what rule out of themselves—as long as the system, or our earth, is thus out of gearing with the mundane machinery? To measure the movement we must have the rate of movement, and as this may be itself a changing or flowing quantity, we must have a differential of a differential, or the rate of the rate of movement, and so on ad infinitum. If the Scripture, as we have shown, does not press us down to the exact conception of modern solar days, so neither, on the other hand, has the skeptical geologist any inductive warrant for his billions and trillions of years. In fact, all our modern years and times, as employed on both sides, are entirely out of the question. How has our man of science found out how fast or how slow nature produced her births in those unmeasured periods? He has measures of layers, or stratified deposits as they lie in our present space, and he has nothing to measure them with but our present divisions of time. He has no measures of fast or slow when applied to changing rates of velocities themselves. How then shall he presume to estimate the forces, and movements, and velocities, of these olamic periods by the same standards of weights and measures we now find established in our settled nature, and regulated by our outward astronomical connection with the whole visible universe? Who shall dare affirm how long it took nature to deposit or upheave a continent, or whether the time was long or short at all, when the very terms of extent we employ have no mean-

ing away from our own visible, tangible, measures of time and space?

Few persons have thought much of the difficulty involved in the problem of making a true standard of weights and measures for our own well settled period. The Parliamentary and Congressional Reports on this subject, made by our most scientific men, show that it is among the most difficult of all the practical applications of science. Some may say, a foot is twelve inches, which is very much the same as saying, a foot is a foot; but how do we know that what is now called a foot, or a yard, is the same that it was even two hundred years ago. Nature, even the present nature, is affecting all our standards. Heat expands; cold contracts; other causes may enlarge or diminish them. But when the standards themselves are changing, what shall measure the standards? And so, also, it may be said, an hour is the twenty-fourth part of a day, or it is sixty minutes, and a minute is sixty seconds; but how great has been found to be the difficulty of determining that length of the pendulum on which our artificial measures of time depend! It varies according to the latitude, and its relation to the earth's equatorial revolution. It is connected indeed with the earth in its connection with the sun and universal system, so that we may correct the mechanical measurement of time by astronomical observations; but let this gearing, it may be said again, be loosed and the diurnal revolution be actually lost, or lost to sight and conception, and how immensely more difficult would this already difficult problem become! It may be easy to measure when we have the measure, and that a constant quantity. But when the very thing

needed is a measure of our measures, and all nature is flowing and changing, and we have no measure of the rate at which it flows and changes, much less of the rate, or ratio, at which the rate itself, in its endless differentials, is ever varying—how unscientific, how unscriptural, too, may we not say, to carry back our days and hours, or even years and centuries, and make them the standards for those unmeasured, and to us immeasurable periods, those unknown olamic days or “days of eternity.” The suggestive language of Scripture demands no such war of ideas; when rightly interpreted, its times are in harmony with the importance and grandeur of the work.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

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### THE TRINE ASPECT OF THE UNIVERSE.

WORLDS IN SPACE.—WORLDS IN TIME.—WORLDS IN DEGREE OR ALTITUDE.—  
LIKE THE THREE DIMENSIONS IN GEOMETRY.—THE SPACE ASPECT, THE FIELD  
OF MODERN SCIENCE.—PLURALITY OF WORLDS IN SPACE.—EMOTIONAL VIEW  
OF THE GREATNESS OF THE UNIVERSE.—NOT DEPENDENT ON IDEAS OF  
NUMERICAL QUANTITY.—THE SPACE ASPECT NOT PROMINENT IN THE BIBLE.  
—IS THE EXERCISE OF CREATIVE POWER A NECESSARY ATTRIBUTE OF DEITY?  
—WORLDS IN DEGREE, OR ASCENDING ORDERS OF BEING RECOGNIZED IN THE  
SCRIPTURES.—THE EPITHET, THE LORD OF HOSTS.—GREEK AND HEBREW  
IDEA CONTRASTED.—PHYSICAL HARMONY.—HARMONY OF EMPIRE.

WHEN we suffer the idea of the universe to unfold itself in the mind, the first thought, perhaps, is that of immense extent in space. But this conception is found to be incomplete. Another element in the great idea is demanded. Thus we are led to think of the world in time. A great time is conceived of as corresponding to great space. Still the mind is not satisfied. As we have the three dimensions in geometry, so there would seem to be demanded three aspects of the universe, each as the complement of the others, and all entering into the ideal perfection. Thus there comes in still another conception. It is that of degree, of rank, of a rising higher and higher in the order of being. The three dimensions are now complete, and the mind is satisfied. We have breadth, we have length, we have altitude. We have what we have called the *trine aspect* of the universe. When the thought has taken full possession of the mind, we cannot lose any part of it without feeling



that the ideal harmony of the whole has been impaired. There is discord, deformity, and irrationality, in the conception of immense worlds in space having an almost infinitesimal brevity in time. It is the thought of vast breadth without length. There is the same discord, the same unsatisfying incompleteness, when we think of the universe as length and breadth without altitude. As we are not satisfied to regard our world in space as the only space occupied by rational personalities, so neither are we satisfied to regard our world in time, or our *world-time* (*Welt-zeit*) as the only world-time to the exclusion of all similar periods past or to come. And when we have come thus far, equally inharmonious is felt to be the supposition that our own level is the highest altitude of the created universe, or that there are not above us orders and ranks of being ascending to multiples bearing some ratio, at least, to the descending grades which we regard as existing below us. It is hard to think that the world ends with our space, that it began with our time, or that its upward growth is bounded by what we may ever so boastingly style our progress. In either of these directions, the conceiving faculty stretches on to infinity, or towards infinity, and the man of science, in his alarm for the human dignity, has no more right to limit it in one aspect, than he has to charge his theological rival with an attempt to bound it in another. We do not say that this feeling is the measure of truth, or that there are these world-spaces, these world-times, and these world-altitudes of being, because the mind has a tendency thus to conceive them; yet, still, we regard it as worthy of consideration in our mental history, as we trace its effects in modes of thinking, and especially in

that linguistic department whose exploration forms the main subject of the present volume.

Now, to make an application of this general thought, we may say that the first, or space aspect, is the favorite field of modern science, although she has lately entered upon the second. The third she has, as yet, almost wholly ignored. Scientific men have either said nothing about it, or they have shown a tendency, at least, to make man the highest thing in creation next to Deity, and the present state of our world the measure of the universal growth.

On the other hand, this first or space aspect is far from being the prominent one in the Scriptures. The Bible tells us nothing about suns and systems, and other space worlds like the one in which our own habitation is assigned. Its expression, "the heavens and the earth," comprehends the universe. By the former is meant the visible round mundus which seems to roll over our heads. And yet in those reduplications of the term to which we have alluded, and in such expressions as we find Psalms, viii, 1, "*the glory above the heavens,*" there might seem to be an aiming at an idea beyond; though whether this would come under the aspect of space or degree, that is, of altitude in supposed upward extent, or of altitude in rank of being, cannot perhaps be certainly determined from such passages alone.

In respect, however, to this space aspect of the worlds, and the silence of Scripture about it, there are two common fallacies on which we would briefly dwell. One is that such aspect comes wholly from science—that is modern science. To this, it is said, we are indebted for our enlarged views of the universe. Now it requires no

great amount of learning, or thought, to show the falsehood of such an assertion. The idea of the plurality of worlds is full as much an a priori as an a posteriori judgment. It belongs to all thinking souls, whatever their amount of either positive or hypothetical science. Such a soul, of its own prompting, asks the question, has not God made other worlds than this, and made them to be inhabited? We find unanswerable evidence of such thinking among the meditative men of the olden time. The idea of the plurality, and even infinity, of worlds, can be shown to have been among the speculations of the earliest philosophy. It may have had, with some, more of a metaphysical than of a physical aspect; and yet the thought, in its simplest and most obvious form, comes most naturally to the human mind. Infinite or vastly extended space we long to fill up in some way; if not with worlds like this, at least with exhibitions or exercises of divine power. Why should not God have thus filled it? Why should he not thus have filled one part of space as well as another? If creation is the manifestation of His glory, is there not a demand for the thought, that this manifestation must have been in spaces and times exceeding our own visible spaces, and our own computed times, by measures to which no human arithmetic can even make an approach? It may, perhaps, be thought that there is a dangerous tendency in such speculations, or in the admission of such a law of thinking as either necessary or natural to the mind. It tends to pantheism, it might be said. It would seem to involve a necessity of creation. But to this there is a prompt and easy answer. Carry our thoughts to their farthest conceivable extent, and the universe is still finite. We are

compelled to admit a time *when* creation is not, and spaces *where* it is not. Carry the objection boldly out to the very conclusion it affects to dread, and such conclusion furnishes its own perfect refutation. If God *must* create, he must create everywhere. The exercise of the attribute (for such would this necessity be on such a supposition) must be coextensive with his presence. If it be said, he creates everywhere through infinite space, but with intervals of space between, then we reply, the same supposed necessity which would regard him as creating at measurable intervals of extent through all or infinite space, lest any measurable portion should be left *wholly* vacant, would also, for the same reason, require a creation in shorter and still shorter intervals of space, until all was filled with the exercise of this ubiquitous attribute. There could be no vacuum anywhere. And so in respect to time and degree. The idea that the universe is finite in one aspect, is no more difficult than the idea of its being finite in the other. A secluded finite portion taken out of infinity, leaving all the rest of infinite space unoccupied, may be conceived, and believed in, as well as finite portions spread through infinity with vast and even immeasurable intervals between them; for it is a fact which could be mathematically proved, that in the present scheme of the universe, as it presents itself to our natural or telescopic eye, the occupied spaces run down to infinitessimals, almost, when compared with the unoccupied. If it be said that even here, in these apparent *vacua*, God has been creating, though in a less degree, and that this may be supposed to consist in the powers of attraction and magnetism energizing *through* those otherwise empty spaces, thus being present *in* them

as a sort of entity, and, in this manner, making a *plenum* or an infinity full of power, although of the lowest degree, then the answer comes irresistibly from the other or third aspect of the universe. The idea of creative necessity can admit no limit in any direction, or in one direction more than in another. It could leave no space unoccupied, no time unemployed, no degree not filled up to the highest capacity or rank of being. If Deity can, at his will, and according to the good pleasure of his will, intermit in one place, he can in another; he can in all places. If he may leave *intervals*, or intervening spaces, he may leave *outside* spaces. If he can intermit at one time, he can intermit at another,—if at one time in one place, then at another time in another place, and at another time in all places. If this can be so, and we know as fact it is so, then the argument which would make creation, in any sense, a necessary work, or a necessary attribute of the Deity, utterly fails. If an attribute at all, its exercise must depend on His own rational will. Thus safely held, we may go as far with the idea as we please. We may imagine no time, or rather we may shut out from our imagination all time, when God was not somewhere creating. There is no pantheistic danger in the thought, even of an eternal exercise of such divine power, if we suppose it to be exercised simply according to the divine volition,—God seeing it to be right and rational, and therefore eternally willing it,—or, if creating at intervals of time and space, thus too creating with a beginning and at intervals, because he sees this to be right and rational, and therefore willing it. We may believe anything here that a revelation otherwise credible tells us about it, or that our

own imagination can conceive, and revelation does not deny. But this is a very different thing from the pantheistic view that has been referred to, and which, by making creation an attribute independent of the Divine will and reason determining the times, and spaces, and degrees, takes away the supernatural, and destroys every logical difference between God and nature. Hence the unavoidable conclusion—The view which makes creation a necessity must be false, because, if such view were carried out to its utmost length, it would follow that God must not only have been creating *always*, but *every where*, and *almightily*, that is, with the utmost possible degree of creative energy. In other words,—He must have been creating at all times, and in all places, all possible things in their highest possible intensity or degree of being—which is infinitely absurd and contrary to fact.

We can conceive of but one answer to this which has even the shadow of plausibility. Such interior intervals of time and space, it may be said, and such lower varieties in degree, may be essential to the excellence of the work *as a whole*, and if so, the creative energy may be supposed to act with as much skill, and, in a certain sense, with as much effective power in ordering these vacancies, and these lower degrees of substance, as in the building of the highest heavens, and in the production of the highest forms of life. This sounds well and even piously. But then, again, why may not the same reasoning be used in respect to an *anterior* uncreative time, and an unmeasured *outside* vacuity? They, too, may be essential to the highest excellence of the work. Its very finiteness may be its completeness, its finish, its *τελειότης*, or *perfection*. It may be all the better work,

better in itself, better fitted for the divine purposes, by having a beginning and a bound. We come again as before to God's will and reason deciding what is best—deciding *what* he shall create, and *where*, and *when*, and *how*, and for how long, and to what extent in space, and to what height of being, in order to have it the best possible universe according to that type, idea, or knowledge of it, which only the Divine Mind can possess. “Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord”? Who, without a revelation, shall assume to determine the idea of the universe? This only can we know—Whether the worlds be one or many,—whether they be all inhabited, or there be some that present only a solitary grandeur to the eye of their Maker,—whether the design of the world be the greatest amount of happiness, or pleasing sensations, of the greatest number of sentient beings, or whether it be an artistic excellence terminating in the work itself without regard to any outside utilities,—or whether there be some other remote and unknown end to which they are all subservient—still, must we say, it is all wise, all fair, all right. This is not an inductive or scientific, but an a priori dictum of the soul. It is the idea of Plato in the *Timæus* (37 C.), where he represents the Eternal Father as rejoicing in his work, when he beholds the universal organism first moving on in beauty and obedience. What is more for us than reason, or Plato, and all philosophy, is the sublime assertion of divine revelation—“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold it was good—very good.”

The other fallacy to which we alluded as connected with this space aspect, is found in the common opinion, that not only the intellectual notion, but the devout feel-

ing of God's greatness, is vastly enlarged by the discoveries of modern science, or what may be called the mathematical or numerical idea of the universe. Now, in reference to this, it may be said, in the first place, that our emotional conceptions are very little dependent upon our speculative or scientific knowledge, as expressed in numerical or quantitative formulas. The reason may follow these to any extent, but the power of *conceiving* can not go beyond a certain limit. We have no higher, no greater *conception* of a million worlds than of a thousand, no greater *conception* of a thousand worlds than of a hundred,—yea, the image or *conception* which one man has of one hundred worlds may be far inferior in grandeur, in vividness, in power of emotion, to that which another soul has of one. David and Socrates, with no knowledge of the numerical distances, or magnitudes, of the stars, may have really had a wider, a loftier, a more reverent feeling of the greatness of God's kingdom than La Place. So, may we say, one soul may have a more lofty as well as a more devout view of God's greatness at the sight of a mountain, than another in the contemplation of planets, and comets, and nebulæ, and double stars, with all their merely numerical or scientific estimations. The reason is that the latter has simply numbers, and mathematical formulæ. His soul is upon his calculus instead of the heavens. It would be equally upon it if employed to measure the most microscopic distances. We astonish ourselves with long rows of decimals, but no delusion could be greater than that which would make these immense numbers the measure of ideas, much less of the moral emotion connected with them. He who praised God for "making Orion and bringing forth Mazzaroth in



his seasons," may really have had a more awe-inspiring view of the universe than the modern lecturer who talks to us of millions, and billions, and trillions, and the wondrous human intellect that can make such transcending calculations in arithmetic. Yet still the stars remain but points for the conception, as well as for the eye. The fancy, too, that peoples them, is only a repetition of the world on which we dwell. It is only a numerical enlargement, and even this, instead of being habitually with the mind, like the sense of grandeur which has always been connected with the visible firmament, is only feebly present while the mathematical formulæ are before it.

The third, or rank aspect, we have said, is peculiar to the Bible. Science has little or nothing to say about it. The Scriptures, both old and new, give us no obscure intimations of ascending ranks of being—of Angels, of Arch angels, Thrones, Dominions, Principalities, Powers, Seraphim, Kedoshim,\* or Holy Ones, rising higher and higher until the mind is lost in the amazing altitude of conceived power and intelligence. There is in all this, however,

\*The reader who will consult such passages as Job, v, 1, xv, 15, Zachariah, xiv, 5, Psalms, lxxxix, 6, 8, Deuteronomy, xxxiii, 3, where this Hebrew word occurs in a peculiar manner, must see that it is not a general term, but denotes a peculiar order of superhuman, and perhaps superangelic, beings. There is much in some of its uses, as in Proverbs, ix, 10, xxx, 3, Hosea, xii, 1, to favor the idea of its denoting the Divine Persons. In such cases, Gesenius would regard it as only a superlative name of Deity, or an intensive plural equivalent to *sanctissimus*. We can only remark here, that this courtly mode of explanation, which is also applied to the name Elohim, is as unsatisfactory as it is unsupported by any sound philological proof applicable to so early a stage of the sacred language.

but little of the space idea; and yet the thought of such ascending ranks of being cannot well be maintained without something of space imagery. Hence, it led to the conception, on which we have before remarked, of a heaven above the visible heavens, and so on to the Third Heavens. This, however, was mainly in aid of the imagination, and for the purpose of obtaining a convenient language. The space imagery did not enter into the essence of the idea. Especially may this be affirmed of the New Testament writers. Paul makes mention of the Heavenly Places, the *τόποι ἐπουράνιοι*, to which he "was caught up, whether in the body or out of the body, he could not tell." Of course, he could not tell us whether it was to a space heavens, or to a purely spiritual region. It was with Paul, therefore, a mere aid to the higher idea. This is shown by the fact, that, although the space view is not denied, he does not dwell upon it, as he would have done had his mind been occupied with it as the leading thought. Had such been the case, he would, doubtless, have been as circumstantial as the ancient Gnostics and the modern Swedenborg, who have given us such exact descriptions of the "Heavenly Places," and determined the number and order of the spheres with as much precision as can be found in any geography of the earth.

There was, however, another Bible view, in which the space, and what we have called the altitudinal, aspect were, in a measure, blended in conception, though the latter is evidently predominant. Reference is had to the frequent mention of the "Hosts of Heaven," as animated and immensely exalted powers. This was conceptively connected with the optical view of the heavenly

bodies, but not in the way of modern science. Some have thought that David might have had the modern notion of celestial worlds inhabited like our own; but of this we find no proof in the Bible. On the other hand, however, nothing can be more clear than that the devout Jewish mind did, in another way, conceive of the heavens as filled with mighty, and intelligent, and glorious beings. Hence, that most sublime expression, Jehovah Sabaoth — The Lord of Hosts. But these visible celestial bodies, instead of being conceived of as worlds in space, were rather regarded as representative each of a separate individual personality. The star was not a world, nor an angel, but its luminosity, although seemingly a point, was the outshining splendor of the mighty being who thus became manifest through it, and shone through it, with a brightness proportioned to his individual rank among the celestial hosts; "for one star differeth from another star in glory."

We have the idea distinctly presented, Isaiah, xl, 26, — "Lift up your eyes on high and see who hath created these, who bringeth out their host by number, and calleth them all by name; in the greatness of might and strength not one faileth." The naming here is not what we have been accustomed to regard as the naming of the constellations. The divine naming, or distinguishing, as we have seen in our comments on the word קרא, Genesis, i, v, is the assigning to each thing its distinct property, rank, or office. There seems also to have been another aspect to the idea. The departed just might be supposed to rise and take rank with the same exalted company; as we read in Daniel, xii, 3, — "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that

turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever." Compare with Isaiah, xl, 26, the similar declaration, Psalms, cxlvii, 4; also, Psalms, ciii, 20, 21,—“Praise Him all ye angels of His that excel in strength; praise Him all ye his hosts—*omnes angeli, omnes exercitus*. We might refer, moreover, to what is said, Job, xxxviii, 7, where the “stars of the morning,” who are also called “Sons of God,” are represented as shouting for joy at the creation of the earth. The “stars of the morning” must here represent personal beings. The special application of the term to the Logos, as we have seen in the ancient versions of Psalm cx, shows that when given to lower ranks of existence, it must still be regarded as denoting the highest antiquity, and a position among the greatest, as well as the earliest, creations of God.

The Septuagint generally renders this remarkable title, The Lord of Hosts, or Jehovah Tsebaoth, by *Κύριος δυνάμεων*; from which it might at first be thought that physical or dynamical powers were intended. But the treatment of them as personalities is just as manifest in the Greek version, as in the Hebrew, or the Latin of the Vulgate. Whatever may be regarded as the primary sense of the root, there is in the noun *צבא* everywhere predominant the idea of a well ordered, harmonized, obedient host; and hence the military aspect of the term. It is also allied to the very similar root *צבה*, whence the noun *צבתי*, *splendor, glory, ornament*; as in Daniel, xi, 45, where it is applied to the “Mount of the holy beauty,” or Mount Zion. It is thus, of all Hebrew words, the nearest to the Greek *Κόσμος*, with this remarkable difference characteristic of the difference in the national conceptions, that the Greek has regard more to

physical or space harmony, the Hebrew to the harmony of rank and government. In the one, the idea clothes itself in the beautiful conception of the "music of the spheres," regarded as physical spheres, rising one above another to the Empyrean; in the other, it is the still sublimer view of the harmony of empire rising octave above octave, through Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers, to the Empyrean of Divine Authority, the Heaven of Heavens of angelic and super-angelic orders, the *primum mobile*, and *Primum Movers* of all spiritual as well as physical existences.

Here, too, we may say, that in this altitudinal or rank aspect, the title יהוה צבאות, *Jehovah Sabaoth*, Lord of Hosts, is the counterpart to the מלך עלמי, *Melek Olamim*, βασιλεὺς τῶν αἰώνων, or "King of Eternities," which is in like manner employed when the universal Kingdom of God is presented in its time aspect, in distinction from its spatial and altitudinal existence.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### PLURALITY OF TIME-WORLDS.

#### A PRIORI DEDUCTION OF THE IDEA.

THE TIME ASPECT OF THE WORLD JUST COMING INTO SCIENCE.—HOW IT APPEARS IN THE SCRIPTURES.—REMARKABLE USE OF AION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT FOR THE WORLD ITSELF, AND OF THE PLURAL FOR WORLDS.—HEBREWS, I, 2, XI, 3.—FROM WHAT LAWS OF THINKING CAME THIS STRANGE IDIOM?—HOW DIFFERENT FROM THE MODERN IDEA.—INSUFFICIENT EXPLANATIONS.—IT DENOTES TIME-WORLDS IN DISTINCTION FROM WORLDS OF SPACE.—HOW IT APPEARS IN THE SYRIAC—THE ARABIC—THE COPTIC.—OLD TESTAMENT USE OF OLAM FOR WORLD.—ECCLESIASTES, III, 11.—OTHER PASSAGES.—ECCLESIASTES, I, 10.—ANCIENT IDEA OF WORLDS OR CYCLES REPEATED.—2 PETER, III, 13, HABAKKUK, III, 6.—“HILLS OF OLAM.”—THE “EVERLASTING WAYS” OR ON-GOINGS OF THE WORLD.—PSALMS, CXLV, 13, “THE KINGDOM OF ALL WORLDS.”—ISAIAH, XLV, 16, “THE EVERLASTING SALVATION.”—ISAIAH, LVII, 15, “HE WHO INHABITS ETERNITY.”—A PRIORI DEDUCTION OF THE IDEA. THE IDEA OF TIME-WORLDS OLDER THAN THE ENLARGEMENT OF THE SPACE CONCEPTION.—IT GOES BACK IN THE PAST AND FORWARD IN THE FUTURE.—WHAT EFFECT THIS SHOULD HAVE UPON OUR INTERPRETATIONS.—SLOW MARCH OF AGES IN THE MORAL WORLD.

THE time-aspect of the world has only of late years been taken into the field of science ; but the Scriptures hold a language in respect to it which, we are satisfied, has not received from critics and commentators the attention it deserves. It must strike the most careless reader of the Greek of the New Testament, that *αἰών* is used in a very singular way ; and yet so much have we been governed by the modern idea, which regards all beyond the present world as a unit of undivided duration, whether we take it before or after, that there has seldom, if ever, been an attempt to account for the idiom. When noticed at all, it is turned off as an accidental anomaly, perhaps,

or treated as having come from some other usage which is actually an effect, instead of a cause, of the peculiarity. But there is nothing accidental in language. It has its laws as sure as those of chemistry or geology. So important an idiom as this must have had its ground in certain ideas; and these ideas, although they may afterwards have become obsolete while the derived expression still remains, must once have had a fresh youthful vigor, and a distinct significance for the mind.

It is a peculiarity of the language of the Bible, that *αἰών* in the New Testament, and *עוֹלָם* in the Old, are used for the *world*, and in the plural for *worlds*, apparently as the Greeks use *κόσμος*, the Latins *mundus*, and we the *world*, or *universe*. Both are words of time and duration; such is their primitive and general character; and yet here both are employed, as it seems, for the very entity of the world, or worlds, as though the time, or period of existence, belonged to this entity as much as material, or extent in space, if it did not, in even a higher sense, constitute its more essential being. Especially is this so regarded when the duration is cyclical. A completed period, or nature, is conceived of as a real thing, just as much as an excluding material, a mathematical quantity, and a bounded space.

Thus, Hebrews, i, 2,—where it is said of the Logos, “By whom he made the worlds,” *εὐὸς ἈΙΩΝΑΣ*,—by whom he made the AGES, the great times or cycles, or the worlds taken chronologically as successive rather than *synchronal*, or spatial existences. Now, how came the word to be thus employed? It will not do to pass it over by simply calling it a *metonymy*, as some have done, or a *usus loquendi*. Whence came this *usus*

*loquendi?* How can we account for it, unless there had been in the Jewish mind from the oldest dates a mode of thus conceiving of the universe, or God's Kingdom, as taken chronologically, or as made up of successive periods, cycles, or *worlds*, reckoned from the remotest past and including the present chronological world among them in the onward march to a similarly divided future?

This usage of *αἰών* is not in the classical Greek. It must, therefore, have come from some influence of the Shemitic tongues upon the Hellenistic or New Testament dialect, or from something peculiar in the Hebrew mode of thinking and conceiving. We find nothing like it in Homer, or Plato, or Æschylus. They never use this word for the world, much less the plural for a plurality of worlds, either in space or time. In the Greek poetry, it is sometimes used for indefinite duration, as in Æschylus, Supplices 573, where Zeus is called King of the never-ceasing eternity,—

Ζεὺς αἰῶνος κρείων ἀπαύστου.

Plato also connects with it his metaphysical notion of duration-less being; but of this cyclical, chronological, or world-sense, especially of this plural usage for successive worlds, there is not a trace.

Now, no mode of speech is better settled in the New Testament. *Αἰών* is as distinctly used for *world* as *κόσμος*,—always, we may say, where pluralities are denoted. Hence the inference is unavoidable—Whilst of “pluralities of worlds” in space they had little or no conception, plurality of worlds in time, must have been an idea early entertained by the Jewish and, in general, the Oriental mind. The New Testament writers never use *κόσμοι*, or any similar word, in the plural· such use



of αἰών, on the other hand, is one of the most distinct features of their peculiar diction. Thus, when they would speak of God's absolute eternity, they say πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων, 1 Corinthians, ii, 7,—“the mystery which He ordained *before the worlds.*” When they would task language to express great antiquity, or to come as near as they could to a never bounded duration, they reduplicate and sometimes triplicate—εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας—καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων—for *ages* and for *ages of ages*, or for *worlds*, and *worlds of worlds*, or worlds without end; as though they would denote higher cycles made of cycles, or greater worlds, that is time worlds, made up of worlds, and so on ad infinitum.

The use of this term in the New Testament for our own particular world, amidst the vast succession, is so common that we need not dwell upon it. It is doubtless employed, too, for subordinate ages, or dispensations, in this present world, or for periods regarded as less than the whole life-time of our terrestrial physical system; but this comes naturally out of the greater applications, and there is no difficulty in determining when it occurs, or in distinguishing it from the greater and original idea.

The most striking passage in the New Testament where this language occurs, and one which has the most direct application to our main argument, is to be found, Hebrews, xi, 3. This we have called our key text, as containing the central idea of the present work. It has been already explained at some length, but not in this connection. “By faith we understand that the *worlds* (τοὺς αἰῶνας) were framed by the Word of God.” To the Hebrew mind the term carried both senses conjoined.

We, from our different mode of thinking, have to separate them, and take one at a time. And yet, as the word and the usage have been traced, we can see the propriety and perfect union of both. "By faith we understand that the *ages* (*the world-times*) were framed by the Word of God." When the passage is thus taken, and fairly taken, it is hard to avoid thinking of those great world-periods in Genesis which seem to be referred to in the setting forth of the antiquity of Wisdom, or the *outgoings* of the hypostatized Word, Proverbs, viii, 24, and Micah, v, 1. The Greek verb employed is in closest harmony with this idea. It is tolerably well rendered in our translation, "*were framed*," but its general sense is *to adapt, to put in order, to arrange, to organize*. "By faith we understand that the worlds were organized, that the *ages* were *put in harmony* with each other by the Word of God." Hence, the admirable Vulgate translation—*Fide intelligimus aptata esse saecula Verbo Dei, ut ex invisibilibus visibilia fierent*. They were put in harmony by the Word of God. How can we help thinking of the successive commands as they are presented in the Mosaic account, where the Word each time *goes forth*, accompanied by the renewing and restoring Spirit, or Ruah Elohim. And God said—"Let there be light,"—"Let there be a firmament,"—"Let the dry land appear,"—"Let the waters bring forth"—until the whole Tri-unity is represented as joining in the declaration—"Let us make man in our image." At each going forth of Him "whose goings forth are of old from the days of eternity," the "things that are seen" come out of "the things that are unseen," until the ages

are organized, the harmony is completed in the birth of the human race, or to use the splendid figure of Dryden, which is not unworthy to be quoted in illustration of the language of Holy Writ—

“The diapason closes full on man.”

It is not enough to talk learnedly, yet fruitlessly, of its being a *usus loquendi*. That explains nothing. Whence came it—we ask again—whence this strange mode of designating the world or worlds chronologically, thus taking them in their time instead of their space-aspect, or longitudinally, we might familiarly say, instead of naming them from their latitude or spatial quantity? It must certainly have sprung up in the ancient Oriental mind from some view of the universal existence very different from that held in modern times as the literal sense of the Bible, or that narrow conception of a few historical generations running back into a complete anterior blank, where the chasm suddenly breaks off with no *aeon*, age, world or *olam* before it,—nothing but an inconceivable solitariness of the divine existence, without any relief to us from the conception of any foregoing ages or cycles occupied with the divine works. Certainly our most modern view, had it prevailed in the earliest times, would never have stamped this feature upon the early languages. It would never have brought out an idiom by which the worlds of God’s kingdom would be named from their chronological rather than their space-aspect, or by a term denoting ages and successions of ages rather than magnitude in extent.

But, to proceed with the solution of the problem,—this remarkable usage of the New Testament Greek came

into it from the Hebrew. In our common mode of translating it is not as visible in the older as in the later Scriptures; still, beyond all question, is it there, as can be made to appear from the following considerations:

The first is the usage of the cognate tongues. It is beyond all doubt in the Syriac. This latter language is pervaded by it. In the Peschito version of the New Testament, the word *olmo*, the same as the Hebrew *olam*, is everywhere used for world, not only in all cases where the Greek has *αἰών*, but even where it has *κόσμος*. The same thing appears everywhere in the Syriac version of the Old Testament. We find it not only in its common time sense, but also in its world significance. Whence did the Syriac derive it? It appears in its earliest use as a written speech, and that, too, as a natural congenious idiom without any mark of foreign growth. It bears about it every evidence of belonging to the oldest stages of this very early language. It is the same, too, in all the Shemitic tongues as they have come down to us. The usage exists underived in each. The Arabic employs for world the same word, or a word from the same root, and there is not the least reason for supposing that this came into it from the Hebrew, either Biblical or Rabbinical. Such a mode of designating the world or worlds, by a word of time in distinction from a word of space, appears to be as old as any part of the language, and in all probability came down from the days of Ishmael, or when Isaac, and Ishmael, and Abraham, and Nahor, yet spoke what was substantially the old Syriac of Padan Aram, then not very different from either branch as they began to diverge afterwards in the dia-

lects of the descendants of Jacob and Laban.\* Hence, in the Koran, God is called *Rabbi 'lalamina*, the Lord of the Worlds, just as in the Old Testament he is designated by that corresponding title, מַלְכֵּנוּ עֵלְמַיִם (Psalms, cxlv, 13,) which Paul translates, 1 Timothy, i, 17, “King of the eternities”—of all eternities, or all worlds.† From this expression in the Koran, Father Maurice, as Sale tells us, endeavored to prove that Mohammed believed in a plurality of worlds, which he calls the heresy of the Manichaeans. Reland shows this to be groundless; and so it doubtless is, if by worlds are to be understood space worlds, or worlds in space. But a plurality of time-worlds, or worlds in time, is an idea much older than Mohammed. It is in the very roots of the Arabic, as in all the Shemitic tongues.

The same usage is in the Ethiopic. In the Eastern Aramæan, or Chaldaic, it is very striking. Hence it has been called a Chaldaism; but this, if it were so, would make nothing against its antiquity. Whence did the Chaldeans and Syrians get it, unless this idea of cycles, or a chronological plurality of worlds, were exceedingly old among men, and came from the earliest elements of thought and speech?

In the Samaritan dialect, the use of this word is quite peculiar. It has the world sense, as in Deuteronomy, xxxiii, 27, where it is used to translate the Hebrew *olam*, —“Underneath are the arms of the world,” that is, “the arms that support the world.” But, besides this, it is

\* That there had become, in this later generation, a more marked difference, the reader will see by consulting Genesis, xxxi, 47.

† See the Koran, Ch. I, and Sales' note.

also employed for *race*, or *nature*; as in Genesis, vii, 21, where it denotes man himself, in distinction from the other natures, as though the human existence, or the existence of the race in its time aspect, might be called a *world*.

There can be no doubt, too, of its being in the most ancient Egyptian. The Coptic word, ENEH, for age, eternity, *ætas*, *seculum*, is also used, in like manner, for *world*, or as corresponding to the Greek *κόσμος*. But this, it might be said, is the later dialect, and how far it represents the earlier Egyptian we cannot surely know. This doubt, however, is put at rest by the evidence that this very word, which abounds in the later Coptic, is a part of the name bestowed by Pharaoh upon Joseph. As given in Hebrew letters it is *זפנתה פניר*, *Zophnath-paeneah*. The latter part is this very Coptic word with the article, and we see, therefore, why the Vulgate translated the title, *Salvatorem Mundi*, "Saviour of the World." The Egyptians, as Gesenius rightly says, were wont to call the land of Egypt by the magnificent title of *the world*. Thus the employment of the term is hyperbolic, but it shows, just as clearly, the ancient application of a time-word to the world itself, as denoting the cosmical entity as well as any word of space. So, also, the scholiast on Josephus' *Ant.* 2, 6, explains it as meaning *σωτήρ κόσμου*, *Savior of the World*.

Winer attempts to account for the idiom, on the principle that a plural noun is sometimes employed when the object denoted consists of several parts, or is so conceived to consist, and that, therefore, this Greek word, Hebrews, xi, 3, and the corresponding Hebrew, are used for the plural idea of the heavens. But there is no proof of

this. The whole analogy of the language, and of this particular usage, is against it. Neither the Greek nor the Hebrew word has the least trace of anything optical in its primary or secondary meanings. The time-sense is never lost in the world idea, and had the Bible writers intended to convey the image of a plurality of heavens, as Winer says, they would have used the common Greek and Hebrew words that are so frequently employed for that purpose in other places.

Something like this notion of Winers' might perhaps be drawn from the Rabbinical Hebrew, and the Rabbinical writers, among whom the old time-sense is less distinct, and the space aspect comes more into view. But this was because they did not understand the ancient idea, and hence their language becomes more and more conformed to the modern notion. The Rabbinical writers have in many respects lost the spirit of the ancient Hebrew; and we need not hesitate to say, that the ideas of the Old Testament are often better preserved among the wild Arab tribes of the desert, than by the doctors of the modern Jewish Synagogue.

It may be urged, as our second proof, that this use of the word is to be traced in those apocryphal Jewish books that were written between the close of the Old Testament and the commencement of the New. The words here are Greek, but there can be no doubt of the Hebrew origin of the ideas, or at all events, of the language having a peculiar Hebraistic shade of meaning. The reader is referred to Ecclesiasticus, xxxvi, 17, ὁ Θεὸς τῶν αἰώνων, and the similar expression, Tobit, xiii, 6, where we have the same title, "The King of the eternities," or "King

of the Worlds," precisely as it is employed by the Apostle, 1 Timothy, i, 17.

We prove, then, that this is not simply a New Testament idiom, having its origin in some peculiar Hellenistic ideas. It is found, too, at a date anterior to any Rabbinical influence. How, then, came it to be employed in this distinct manner, unless the usage had had a distinct and well understood ground in the older Scriptures? Its employment in the New Testament could not have been sudden or capricious. We say, then, in the third place, that this world-sense of the time-word *olam*, is a clearly marked idiom of the old Hebrew writings. We may not seem to meet it so often there, but this is owing to its not being sufficiently brought out in the common translation.

It may be said, by way of preparatory remark, that there is certainly something worthy of note in the plural use of the Hebrew word, and especially those reduplications of it by which they would seem to make an eternity the measure, or measuring unit, of still greater eternities. But what is yet more striking is the usage of which we are now treating, namely, the application of the word to the world, and, among others, to this present world of the human race. The most clear passage in which we find this beyond all dispute, is Ecclesiastes, or Koheleth, iii, 11,—“God hath made everything beautiful in its time; also, he hath set the *world* in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end,” or “He hath so set the world in their heart,” etc. In thus rendering  $\text{=}\ddot{\text{z}}\text{'}\text{=}$ , our common translation is in perfect harmony with all the ancient versions without exception. The Syriac has that same



word by which it so often translates *αἰὼν* in its version of the New Testament, and which it uses, Hebrews, i, 2, xi, 3. The Septuagint has the corresponding Greek. The Vulgate renders it *mundus*. The Targum gives the same meaning as the Syriac, and employs the same radical word. To this consent all the older commentators, and the best among the moderns, although they would draw different inferences as to the fair meaning of the passage. De Wette and Gesenius retain the rendering *world*, but interpret it of the Welt-sinn, the love or study of the world; but, as the opponents of the view maintain, this sense of worldliness has but little agreement with the context. Hence Hitzig goes entirely off this old ground, and resorts to the Arabic, whence he gets the sense of *intelligence*, although, in so doing, he has to give the word an entirely different pointing, and to take a late derivative meaning which has come by a remote and circuitous route from the old Hebrew idea of the root. In this he is followed by Prof. Stuart, who holds in contempt all the ancient uniformity of versions and commentators, because, he says, such a rendering gives no intelligible sense. Perhaps it does not when viewed from a stand point which permits us to see no other than the space meaning of the word *world*. But take the term in its chronological aspect, and there comes forth a sense not only easy, but most clear and significant. Let the reader bear in mind the scope of the preceding verses,—“there is a time or season for all things that are done under the heavens,”—and he will see the marked contrast between the particular periods of which man can judge, and the great *olam* or world-time whose design and idea baffle all his search, unless aided by a

revelation making known the origin and destiny of the mundane system. This is so fully declared in chapter viii, 17, of this same book, that we may almost regard it as an exegesis of the passage before us,—“Then I saw in respect to the whole work of God, that man is not able to find out the work which is done *under the sun*; seeing that should a man labor in the search he shall not find it; yea, though a wise man (a philosopher) should say he would know it, he shall not be able to find it out.”\*

The writer had found a special season for everything —“a time to be born, a time to plant, a time to love, a time to hate,”—but the great all-containing time who could understand? God hath so presented the world to the human mind (for this is the meaning of  $\text{כִּי}$  here) that although it might reason well of passing events, it “could not find out the end from the beginning.” The individual man occupies but a point in the great world cycle. He is in the current or flow of events which is ever sweeping round to the great consummation, but his angle of vision is too small to take in more than a few degrees, or a few seconds of a degree, in the mighty arc, and hence all beyond the vicissitudes so graphically presented in the first verses of the chapter is in utter darkness. He knows not the end from the beginning. With this compare what follows verse 14th, and the sense becomes still more evident. Man lives in the flowing moments, but “that which God does is  $\text{לְעוֹלָם}$ , forever,”—for the olam. It has reference to the great world-

\* If any one would have a practical commentary on these words of Koheleth, let him study the speculations of the Greek schools of philosophy respecting the origin and idea of the World.

design or idea. This ignorance of man is for his moral benefit, that he may live by faith when he cannot see and know. And so Koheleth proceeds to say,—“God hath done this that man might fear before Him.” And then again comes that cyclical idea which seems to have been a favorite with this musing preacher,—“That which is has already been, and that which is to come was long since, and God will require again that which is past.” The Hebrew word here rendered *past* is most expressive. It literally means *that which is pursued*, as though our mundane existence were a continual chase, one event ever pressing upon another, or as Ovid describes the world’s ceaseless flow,

“ut unda impellitur unda,  
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem.”

The world-sense, in Ecclesiastes, iii, 11, we may regard as put beyond a doubt; and this once established, we may reverse the argument. It cannot have this meaning, say Hitzig and Stuart, because it would be the only passage in which it occurs. Very weak reasoning, this, even if the fact were so. It would be simply saying, that if a thing did not happen twice it could not happen at all. But the argument, whether strong or weak, may be effectually turned the other way. This frequent New Testament world-sense once established here, and shown to be in such admirable harmony with the context, we have the best warrant for extending it to other parts of the Old Testament, where it gives a clear and harmonious significance. Thus, in our frequently quoted Psalm xc, 2,—“Before the mountains were born, before the genesis of the earth, from *olam* to *olam*, from *world* to *world*, Thou art, O God.” Compare the context and

observe the perfect unity in the transition of thought. "Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Here we have the idea of the settled place, the homestead which remains comparatively permanent amid the flowing generations of its successive occupants. In most impressive contrast, God is said to be *from world to world*. As our individual life is measured by years, so pathetically reckoned in verse 10th of this same Psalm, and our world-time, or the life-time of our race by generations, so is His age, or His kingdom, measured by worlds or world-times as the greatest measuring unit of which we can form any conception. "From world to world Thou art,"—that is, through a series of such aeons or olams making an aeonian existence, or one to be expressed by the adjective *αιώνιος*, (or olamic,) as our existence, or the existence of our race, is denoted by similar adjectives derived from the solar year. God's life time is aeonian, as the earthly life time of the human race is centennial or millennial.\*

\* It is the proper place here to remark on an inference that some minds might draw from what has been said respecting these Greek and Hebrew words. We mean, in reference to their applications to the subject of future retribution. It is true, the *single* terms do not of themselves, or necessarily, denote *endless*, but simply unmeasured duration. It should be borne in mind, however, that it is by their fearful reduplications the Scriptural writers express that idea which no single noun, unless it be an abstract negative, can fully set forth. But what the single noun fails to do, is accomplished by the adjective *αιώνιος*, as a term of *greatest measurement*. If we attentively consider its formation, and compare it with other measuring words, we shall understand its boundless significance. *Aeonian* duration is that which is measured by aeons, ages, worlds, or eternities, just as finite periods are measured by years and centuries, and are therefore called

We venture to take the ground that the same sense will suit the passage, Ecclesiastes, i, 10,—“Is it said, Lo, this is new? It hath been already (*le-olamim*) in the *ages* that were before us.” What prevents our taking here the larger and more primary idea, and thus translating it? “in the *worlds* that were before us.” Such, too, may be the rendering of the Septuagint and the Vulgate. Both use the same terms that are employed in the Greek and Latin, of Hebrews, xi, 3, and that so often have this world-sense in the New Testament. Can any one say that the old translators did not have the same thought in the rendering of this passage, and that their words, in this sense, would not be a fair equivalent of the Hebrew? So, too, may we say, in respect to the Syriac version. It employs here the very word it has so frequently, and almost constantly, used for worlds. Now it need not be maintained that such is the true and only rendering of this passage. The word may be taken in the lesser sense, or for ages reckoned in this present world-time; but the other suits well the train of thought indulged by this contemplative Hebrew sage. He had just before been speaking of the great cycles of nature as exhibited in the celestial revolutions, the currents of the winds in their continually repeated gyrations, the running of the rivers into the sea and their returning again by evaporation, or some other cyclical law, to the

*centennial, millennial, etc.* There being no greater unit of measurement than the *olam*, there is no limit to the conception of the *whole* which it measures or divides. In this way the adjective comes to denote absolute eternity, as is put beyond all doubt by its use, 2 Corinthians, iv, 18. It is there the *antithesis* of the *temporal*, and can have no measurable bound.

place from whence they set out. All things are represented as in perpetual circling revolution; and what was there unnatural in his extending it to other natures or worlds preceding this on a vaster scale? The cyclical idea that all things come round and round again, we know was a very ancient one; Koheleth was probably familiar with it; and if so, nothing would be more germane to the train of thought he was indulging. This interpretation does not, of course, assume the correctness of any such cyclical view, or regard the Scriptures as endorsing it, any more than it endorses the other speculations of Koheleth respecting man and his destiny. Yet still his use of language would be good authority in respect to the predominance of certain ancient ideas, whether true or false; and this is the chief use we would make of it in the argument. The reader will see, too, how much this interpretation is supported by the view already taken of Ecclesiastes, iii, 15, where the cyclical idea is so very evident.

In Ecclesiastes, iii, 11, the world-sense is the only one which it will fairly admit. There are, again, passages where it gives a striking and harmonious meaning, though not so exclusively as to make us certain that there can be no other. Among these we may refer to Habakkuk, iii, 6,—“He stood and measured the earth, He looked and scattered the nations; then leaped apart the ancient mountains; sink down the everlasting hills; His ways are everlasting.” In each one of these clauses, especially the last, may  $\text{עִלְיֹן}$ , like  $\alpha\iota\omega\upsilon$  in the New Testament, be rendered *world* to the increase both of the significance and sublimity of the passage. “The everlasting hills” are the hills of olam, the hills of the world, or of the world-

time, the hills that were fixed when the earth received its present form, and now remain unmoved amid all the flowing changes of the present nature. There they stand as witnesses of the old creative days, during which they were *born*, as the Psalmist says. As we survey their changeless attitudes, antiquity, great antiquity, is the first thought that comes into the meditative soul. How very, very old they are, we mentally exclaim, as we behold them ever calmly looking down upon us unless disturbed in their long repose by some such supernatural convulsion as the prophet is describing, when there comes forth again the irresistible word, and they leap apart, or bow them down in remembrance, as it were, of the ancient power.\*

In the latter clause of Habakkuk, iii, 6, the proposed rendering would be still more in harmony with the whole style and spirit of the passage. It may be remarked in the first place, that the pronoun really belongs to the predicate of the sentence, so as to make it read, "the everlasting ways are His," or "His are the everlasting ways;" that is, to Him they belong as their rightful Lord

\* "The same phrase, "the everlasting hills," occurs in Genesis, xlix, 26, and Deuteronomy, xxxiii, 15. Of a similar kind is the remarkable expression, the *Rock of Olam*, the "Rock of Ages," the Rock of the World, or Rock of Eternity. As applied to Deity, and the divine protection, nothing in language could so well combine the ideas of stability and duration. See, also, Deuteronomy, xxxii, 4, and Isaiah, xxvi, 4, where the above phrase is rendered "everlasting strength." Compare with them Deuteronomy, xxxiii, 27,— "The ancient God (*Elohe Kedhem*, literally the God of antiquity,) is thy refuge, and underneath are the arms of olam"—the arms of the world, that built the world in space, and support its on-goings in time.

to the exclusion of any claim of chance or nature. This at once opens up the passage, and causes it to assume an older and a higher aspect. This, too, was in the minds of some of the older commentators, such as Pagnini, Drusius, Vatablus, and others,\* who render הליכות עולם, *itineraria mundi, vestigia eternitatis, the ways or on-goings of the world, the footsteps of eternity*. These they refer not only to the government of God in human history, but to the harmonious movements of the celestial hosts. "Intelligitur motus sphaerarum celestium, quasi dicas, non solum regit mundum istum inferiorem sed etiam superiorem," (Vatablus.) "Ita *itineraria mundi* vocantur rationes agendi quibus Deus hunc mundum eternum regit," (Drusius.) Sublime as this is, it has too much of a topical or space aspect, or rather, is too astronomical to agree with the old ideas. If, however, we take *olam* in its chronological or time-world sense, the harmony of expression and idea becomes complete. The *itineraria mundi* are the on-goings of the world in time, the creative epochs in which God is represented as marching forth from eternity; for הליכות has strikingly this sense of a regular stately progression with something of a military aspect, as may be seen in Nahum, ii, 6, Job, vi, 19, Psalms, lxxviii, 25. These "everlasting ways," or on-goings of *olam*," have been referred to the historical dealings of God in the Jewish exodus. In thus explaining it, some commentators run into the most frigid interpretations; the "mountains" are nations, and the "hills" are kings, whilst the "everlasting ways are victories obtained by means of the divine aid." In its general sense, doubtless, some parts of this sublime prophetic

\* See the References in the *Critica Sacra*.



anthem might present an adaptation to the exodus, or other historical events; but we feel that there is nothing forced in the thought that there is, also, a higher sense, and that in other parts the writer rises above the national history to the contemplation of the greater works of God. From the mention of the "ancient mountains" and the "everlasting hills," the transition to the old creative times was most direct. We feel that we are in the risings and swellings of a climax, and where could it have a more fitting summit than in such a challenging to Deity the very on-goings of the world in their highest order of chronological development. It need only be remarked here, that the view thus given is supported by the language of the Vulgate,—*Contriti sunt montes seculi, incurvati sunt colles mundi ab itineribus æternitatis ejus.*

Our next reference is to Psalms, cxlv, 13, commonly rendered, "*Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom.*" The translation here is defective. There is certainly something in the Hebrew which our single term *everlasting* fails to express. The plurality so prominent in the Hebrew wholly disappears, and with it all the ideas it so vividly suggests. The original phrase is the plural of *olam*, and that too enlarged, as far as such an idea can be enlarged, by the word *all*. "Thy kingdom is a kingdom (כל עולמי) of all eternities;" or, to take again that word which makes so consistent a sense in other similar passages, (and nowhere suits the idea better than in this place), "a kingdom of *all worlds.*" Here we have distinctly a "plurality of worlds," not in the modern scientific or spatial, but in the chronological sense. The *antiquity* of the divine kingdom, not its *extent*, is the inspired idea, and yet it is an antiquity

measured by *worlds*, by worlds in succession, or as they follow each other in the הִלְכוֹת or ongoinings of the universe.\* There is the same expression put in its most reduplicate form in the Chaldee of Daniel, viii, 18,—“And the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom *forever, even forever and ever.*” The Chaldaic, where the word has the world-sense more frequently than in Hebrew, would be rendered literally—“for the world and the world of worlds.” Compare with this, also, the Greek of Revelations, xi, 15, and xxii, 5. In the latter passage, the reduplicate form which we render “world and world of worlds,” would seem to be intended to denote an absolute or endless eternity. The millenary reign is only one *olam*; the reign which succeeds it is forever and ever—for the world of worlds.

There would seem, then, to be meant by this expres-

\* The Rabbinical expositions of such passages as these exhibit a strange mixture of cabalistical absurdities, of later notions, and along with these, at times, some still remaining evidences of the old Hebrew spirit. Sometimes they would seem to give the plural expression *Kol Olamim*, a topical or space sense, and to refer it to what they call the mundus inferior, the mundus medius, and the mundus supremus—“the lower, the middle, and the upper world.” Again, it has with them a chronological import, and they speak of the *saeculum presens* and the *saeculum venturum*. Sometimes they talk analogically of the *mundus magnus*, the great world without, and the *mundus parvus*, or micro-cosm of the human body. At other times, they regard the number of chronological or time-worlds as immense, but endeavor, nevertheless, to estimate, in their cabalistical way, the duration of the great Olamic Kingdom. They find this in the numerical value of the consonants (K L) composing the Hebrew word for *all*. These making fifty, they infer that there will be just 50,000 such *worlds* making the *great world*. Along with this should be noted their speculation about the six ages of the world, each a thousand years. See Buxtorf, *Chald. Lex.*

sion, "the kingdom of all eternities," or "of all worlds," the immeasurable cycle of God's existence and government made up of worlds or olams, just as human kingdoms are measured by solar years and centuries. It is the great Yom, the Eternal Day, to which there is so remarkable an allusion, Isaiah, xliii, 13,— "Even from the day,"  $\text{בְּיִמֵּי}$ , or, "before the day I am He." It is the  $\text{ἩΜΕΡΑ ΑΙΩΝΟΣ}$  of 2 Peter, iii, 18. It is that day, so called in another well known passage, Psalms, ii, 7 — "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee." It is the ineffable natal day of "the First Born before all creation"\* — who "was anointed from everlasting before

\* Compare with these, Psalms, lxxii, 17,— "Before the sun is he called a son,  $\text{בְּיִמֵּי שֶׁמֶשׁ}$ ; or more literally, "his name is affiliated." Even Rosenmüller has to admit that this Psalm refers to the Messiah, and that the unusual verb has the idea of sonship. The Targum and Syriac both render it of the past eternity,— "His name was *before the sun*," a Hebraism which denotes what Paul expresses by  $\text{πρωτότοκος}$ , *before the creation*, or a *son before all creation*. But may not the Hebrew tense here be taken, as it sometimes is, for all time, past and future? And then the "*affiliation*," in this passage, the "*sonship*," Psalms, ii, 7, and the "*anointing from everlasting*," of Proverbs, viii, 23, would be the same with the Kingdom and the Throne, Psalms, xlv, 9, Hebrews, i, 8. A certain class of writers may doubtless find some things in the Second Psalm that will suit the temporal David, and some things in Proverbs, viii, which they may treat as the personification of an attribute. But have they looked well to the difficulties on the other side? Have they weighed, as they ought, this mysterious language so transcending all conceptions of an earthly kingdom, or an earthly begetting, or the rhetorical proprieties of a mere allegory. It is certainly not a little remarkable that the same Hebrew word, and in the same unusual connection, should be used, Psalms, ii, 6, and Proverbs, viii, 24, to express the inauguration of the Eternal Son and of the Eternal Wisdom. In both cases the verb translated "*set up*" should be rendered "*anointed*."

the earth was”—“whose goings forth are from the days of eternity.”

With this language of Psalms, cxlv, 13, we may also compare Isaiah, xlv, 16, which is rendered, “saved with an *everlasting salvation*.” The Hebrew is *השׁוּעוֹת עֲלָמִים*, “a salvation of the eternities,” extending through all *worlds*, or commensurate with the kingdom of God. These all have the same import, but there is no part of Scripture which they more strongly call to mind, than the declaration, Isaiah, lvii, 15,—“Thus saith the High and Lofty One who *inhabiteth eternity*.” The language here is every way remarkable. In Psalms, cxlv, 13, there is an attempt to denote the absolute eternity of God’s kingdom by way of approximation, as we may say, through pluralities and reduplications. To this end there is made use of a flowing term of number and measurement; for vast as olams and olams of olams may be, they are still words of flowing duration. But in this passage from Isaiah we have a term of fixedness and constancy. The eternally flowing series is *summed*, as the mathematicians say, in the constant term *עֲד*, a word which although used for eternity, is very different from *olam*, and presents the idea in a very different manner. Gesenius makes it from *עָרָה*, which is a verb of motion with a flowing sense—*transiit, processit*. But nothing could be more opposed to the usual force and spirit of the word. Constancy, completeness, totality, seem ever to enter into its radical idea; and hence we might better make it from the root *עָרַד*, which, though seldom used, has clearly this significance of permanence and stability, as we see in Psalms, xx, 9, cxlvi, 9, and cxlvii, 6. Hence this word is so frequently put as the complement of the

flowing olam in the frequent phrase לעולם ועד rendered *forever and ever*. It is like the *n*th term at the end of a mathematical series of unknown length, to indicate a finality, or summation of all the terms that are understood to intervene, however numerous they may be. As though we should say, *for the world, and yet*—for ever\* and yet—denoting by the addition the sum, the totality regarded as all brought into the idea, or the *ever-present* instead of the *ever-lasting*. It would be eternity viewed, if we can so view it, as without futuration or praeterition, or, as a quaint old lexicographer has expressed it,—“*as yet, and as yet, and ever as yet, forever, and forever more, as yet.*” Boethius and the Schoolmen come as near to it, perhaps, as language can, when they call it *tota simul et interminabilis existentiae possessio*.†

And this idea we get from that sublimest of all sublime expressions, Isaiah, lvii, 15. Eternity, thus regarded as something constant, is God's *dwelling place*. “He *inhabits* it.” He fills it all, even all time, as he fills all space, and this, too, constantly, indivisibly, or all in all.

Luzatto, the ablest of modern Jewish commentators, regards this word ער as containing here a space idea, which he says belongs to other Hebrew words of time. He

\* Our Saxon *ever*, like the German *Ewig*, originally denoted an age, or eternity, like *olam*. So that the phrase, for *ever*, would be, for *the age*.

† This would seem to be something like the idea of Plato in the *Timaeus*, 37, E, where he speaks of the æonian state as *remaining in one*, ἐν ἐνί, and *time* as an *image* of it “*proceeding by number.*” One is substantial, the other phenomenal. One is at rest, the other flowing, or seemingly so; just as the revolving mirror seems to set in motion the immovable landscape of which its flowing series is the reflection

thinks that it denotes the highest Heavens in space altitude, *une hauteur infinie*, and so it is put for infinite space itself. He gives a similar conception of height to *olam* when predicated of the hills. We can see no grounds for this, either in the radical or any secondary senses of the words. It shows, however, that this able critic regarded the expression as denoting a most remarkable and unusual idea. Gesenius would make an ellipsis here of the word heaven, rendering עִיִּן זֶר, *habitans (coelos) in eternum*. But there is not a particle of authority for such a course in any similar usage of the Hebrew Scriptures. We have, however, something like the true idea presented in Psalms, lxi, 5,—only there it is by means of the flowing rather than the constant expression,—“I shall dwell in thy tabernacle forever,” or literally, “in thy tabernacle of the eternities.” The verb rendered *inhabit*, Isaiah, lvii, 15, more commonly means to dwell in a tent or tabernacle, but this by its contrast only heightens the idea, or gives us a stronger impression of stability and security. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews more than intimates that the earthly Jewish tabernacle was a type of the highest Heavens; but God’s tabernacle of the eternities, wherein He dwelleth forever more, shall never be taken down like that which “was pitched in the wilderness.” Nay more, to use the inspired language, it shall survive all the mutations of the physical worlds, as they are “laid aside,” age after age, or *world after world*, like a worn

\*It is the same figure both in Isaiah and Revelations,—“When the hosts of Heaven shall grow old (*tabescet omnis militia coelorum*, Vulg.) and the Heavens themselves shall be rolled together *as a scroll*.”

out garment, (Psalms, cii, 27,) or "rolled up" like an ancient book\* (Isaiah, xxxiv, 6, Revelations, vi, 14,) when a new page and a new chapter has to be brought out in the ever flowing history of time.

We find a strong support for this world sense of *olam* when we trace the same connection of ideas in old languages of a different family, and very remote from the Hebrew. It may be maintained, on strong philological grounds, that it exists in the Saxon and the German. When we run up to the primary notion of our word *world*, and its kindred *Welt*, the cycle or revolution idea is predominant. In the Saxon *world* this might be thought to be topical rather than chronological, but, in fact, the space and time ideas are closely related, and both may be embraced in the same term. There is evidence, however, that the latter enters largely, and we think, predominantly into the significance of the root. For such an idea, too, we have the highest modern authority. Humboldt, in his *Kosmos*, vol. 1, page 70, quotes with approbation the decision of James Grimm, "that the word *Welt*, and which was *weald* in the old German, *worold* in the old Saxon, and *weruld* in the Anglo-Saxon, was a *period of time*, an age, (*saeculum*,) rather than a term used for the world in space." This is confirmed by the fact that in the fragments of the Old Gothic version of the Bible, made by Ulfilas, the Gothic word for ages is used for world, just as in the Hebrew and the Greek. Thus, in Timothy, i, 17, the expression "to the king eternal," is rendered, *dhiudana aive*, "to the king of the worlds or ages;" *aivs* having the same meaning as the Latin *aevum*, the German *ewig*, and our *ever*. Thus, when carried back to the roots, or seminal signifi-

cance of the terms, our common translation of Hebrews, i, 2, "by whom he made the *worlds*," means of itself, and without going to the Greek, the same as the expression "by whom he made the *ages*," that is, the great days or cycles of the chronological worlds.

But what is the design of all this? We will endeavor to satisfy the reader. It is not maintained, or we are not required to believe, that those who anciently used these terms in this manner had any definite filling up of the conception, or any definite division of the ages, or any supposed measure of their duration. But this is clear. They had a language respecting them very different from our own, except so far as the modern usage has been affected by a transfer into our modern theological speech of the old phraseology. These terms show that the Hebrews and earliest nations had conceptions of world-times beyond what could be included in historical limits. Such conceptions, too, we find giving rise to reduplications and pluralities, and the use of time words as actual names for worlds, and terms of duration to denote the very substance or thing that endures, and other forms such as would never have come originally from our modern way of thinking respecting creation and its times. We have, indeed, from our Scriptural education, become somewhat familiar with these old modes of speech, or we employ the single epithets used in our translations without much thinking of the plural forms and plural ideas they cover up, or the scholar passes it over as a mere accidental *usus loquendi*, yet still the fact remains, the fact to which we would chiefly aim to call attention,—these peculiar forms would never have naturally arisen from our modern way of thinking and conceiving. We picture to ourselves



the ante-adamic eternity as a blank indivisible past, having no plurality in idea, and, therefore, of course, suggesting none in language. We think of the future eternity, in the same way, as an undivided\* unity, an ever flowing continuousness, just as we also image to ourselves the whole universe *above us*, or between us and Deity, as occupied with one sparse order of beings, and these faintly conceived of as necessary to some kind of intercourse between God and man. But this could never have given rise to such language as we find in Hebrews, xi, 3, 1 Timothy, i, 17, Psalms, cxlv, 13.

This, then, is the real point, and we think we may say, the strong position of our argument. No doubt the terms on which we have been dwelling are frequently used in lesser senses. They are employed sometimes for long historical divisions, and to express a great historical antiquity; but this comes easily from the other conception. The greater was the earlier. The lesser is on the very face of it poetical or hyperbolic, and must have grown out of the larger and more literal usage. There is the same tendency in respect to words of space. We give the greater name of the sea to the prairie and the desert; we hyperbolically characterize the ocean itself as a *world* of waters. So is it with the old words of duration. To invert this order every thoughtful reader

\* Prof. Stuart, in a remark in reply to Hitzig on Ecclesiastes, xii, i, says:—"Time divided is not predicable of a future state. Still, the Scriptures speak everywhere *more humano*, or in a popular way, in regard to the future. Thus *ages of ages* is a frequent designation of it." But that such was a *popular view* among the Jews, and applied to the past as well as to the future, is all that is necessary for our argument.

of the Scriptures must feel to be unnatural. The greater applications as they are made to God and Christ, to the "going forth" of the Logos, to the ages of the Divine Kingdom, and the antiquities of the Divine creative Wisdom, seem alone to fill up the measure of the idea; whilst the lesser use derives all its rhetorical and poetical effect from the feeling the mind carries along of these fuller and higher senses.

Now, in addition to these considerations, let there be borne in mind the use which, it has been shown, the Hebrews make of the word *yom*, or day, for any cyclical period, moral or physical, especially its remarkable application to the eternal day of the Divine Kingdom, and the reader is prepared for the reasonable and legitimate application the writer would make of the whole argument. It is this:—Such a view of the old ideas, and of the old language, does not prove the truth of the geological periods, or of any particular duration of them, or that they were meant in the Scriptures; but it does show, that to minds thus conceiving, and to a people accustomed to the use of such language, the interpretation of Genesis for which we contend, would seem most easy and natural. As viewed from such a stand-point, there would seem nothing forced in giving to *yom* an indefinite and long cyclical duration.

The preceding investigation has been conducted chiefly on exegetical grounds. We think, however, that there may be given an a priori reason, if it may be so called, why the time or cyclical idea of the world, or worlds, should develop itself sooner than the space conception, and earlier show itself in language. The latter would

seem to be more bounded by the sense. The first view of the mundus is that of a sphere of visible space shut in by a sky or solid empyrean—at least so appearing to the eye—and this presents a limit, as it were, to the conceiving faculty. The visible cosmical scheme of the earth and heavens seems complete. Imagination is checked, and the mind rests in the old view until there comes in the new vision, or the new sense, we may almost call it, of the modern telescope. And now there comes, too, a new freedom of the conceiving faculty. “The everlasting gates, the doors of olam, are lifted up,” and the soul awakes to a wider spatial view of the Divine Kingdom;

“Vivida vis animi pervicit, et extra  
Processit longe flammantia moenia mundi.”

There was an ancient idea of a plurality even of space-worlds, but this, as we have seen, was more a metaphysical than a physical speculation. Hence, it never became rooted in the common thought, and thence in the common speech. The other, or chronological plurality, was much older, especially as exhibited in the Oriental mind; and this is shown by the manner in which it impressed itself on the earliest language and its earliest words.

The conception, we say, was most natural. Even in our individual childhood, we never limit our back view of existence by any dark line coeval with our own birth, but naturally carry our thoughts, even before we are directly told of it, to an antiquity preceding, or to something which was before we were born, and out of which we came. We cannot very well think otherwise. Our conceptions of time, coming from the inner sense, are

not thus limited or hindered by the visible, as is the case with our first conceptions of outer space,—so much so, indeed, that it even requires an effort to overpass them. Thus, also, in the world's youth. Go back as far in antiquity as we may, there is still discoverable the same tendency, as now, to speak of the "olden times,"—of the ages that were before us, long before us, and in comparison with which, as Bildad the Shuhite says,—“ We are but of yesterday.” It may be long before men begin to think much of space worlds *beyond* this. But worlds or ages, *before* this, and worlds *after* this, belong to the earliest thought and the earliest speech. Either conception—the *ante* or the *post*—is natural; and the one as natural as the other. Thus, then it is, that as we pass upwards from our solar days to years, and from years to generations, the conceiving faculty feels the need of some greater measure which may be regarded as immense when compared with them, and so there comes into language its olam, its aeons, its secula, its ages, and ages of ages, its ever, its forever, and ever and ever, its strange reduplications, and its still stranger world-times used as names for the very worlds themselves.

And then this is carried still farther. The mind comes naturally in possession of the idea that such may be not only the order of our conceptions, but also the great order of God's actual proceeding in nature, as typified by a lesser order manifested in its lesser flowing periods. As our days have their evening and their morning, our years their winter and their spring, so these long days, these mighty years, these ages of ages, have their corresponding divisions of natural and supernatural development. So that the typical character, the representation

of the greater by the less, may be conceived of as running up from the shortest to the longest cycles of the natural worlds, each presenting for its dividing unit the completed period, or whole cycle of the lower,—days of years—and years of ages—and ages of ages—where the mind is wearied, and the failure of words drives us to those reduplications by which all languages, especially the early languages, have labored to carry on the ever extending thought. This tendency of conceiving we carry also into the moral world, filling it too with its ages and cycles, and regarding the language as no more figurative, or no less literal, in the one application than in the other.

Instead of such conceptions being merely imaginative, are they not rather in harmony, not only with our more extended knowledge of nature as derived from modern science, but also with those expanding views of God's kingdom which grow out of the closest study of the Sacred Scriptures,—so that our system is conceived of as no more cut off from a chronological connection with the whole previous and coming duration, than it is from all present physical connection with cotemporary systems in space? In both ways the conception of plurality leads to the idea of unity. In other words, we come to regard the world, or worlds, as one great *olam* chronologically and historically, as well as one κόσμος in their space or physical organization.

And then, too, may we not soberly ask,—Is there not something of this sort laboring, as it were, for utterance in many parts of the Bible, and especially in the remarkable words, and still more remarkable reduplications of them, we have been considering? Is it easy to avoid the thought, that in these swelling climaxes of “ages and

ages of ages," ever ascending upward toward the infinite, the writers were travailing with an idea, which, although not definitely clear, and not definitely filled up with either a real or mythical history, did nevertheless represent to their minds actual ante-terrene and ante-adamic periods, occupied, in some way, with God's works both spiritual and natural? Can we believe that such language could have come from the conception of a blank duration like the metaphysical notion of time, or of solitary ages of the Divine Existence, or still less that such a barren idea—barren we call it, notwithstanding it is the favorite notion of many modern theologians—could ever have given rise to such terms of division and plurality?

And this is a mode of conceiving which carries us, not only back to the past, but forward to the future. We have already alluded to the exceeding inconsistency, as well as narrow philology, of those who would expand prophecy indefinitely, whilst they shut up to the closest limits the no less important and no less mysterious field of creation. We would only say, here, that it is the same effect whether our thoughts flow onwards to periods or olams to come, or back to those that are past. The word *day* becomes a most important term in both departments of exegesis, and the feeling which acquits the lengthened interpretation of inconsistency in the one case, ought to have an equal effect in the other. Such days are alike extraordinary, whether predicated of the great ages that have fulfilled their generation, or of the great ages that are yet to be born. As we get away from our present, whether by receding or advancing, there comes upon us from either quarter the impression of the vast, the remote, the immeasurable. Ordinary

conceptions of time will not do. Ordinary terms swell out to a higher sense. And so we get the idea,—and a most natural one it is,—that the “latter day,” the predicted times of glory on our earth, will be of immense duration, measured not by common years, but having rather a millennium for its measuring unit, as if employed to measure a millio-millennial cycle.

There is another analogy that ought to force itself upon the attention of those interpreters who would confine the creative works of God within the narrowest limits. How slow, how gradual, have been the divine dealings in the moral world! How many apparently barren periods in time, like the apparently barren fields in space! There are days and cycles here, but how slowly they come about! How impatient we are with history as we read of their tardy accomplishment! So that here, too, we are most impressively reminded of the declaration of the Apostle, that “the Lord is not slow *as men count slowness*,” and “that with Him a thousand years are as one day.” He could have created a perfected Church, as he could have created a finished world, by an instantaneous exertion of his omnipotent grace. At least so it would seem to our reason. But he has chosen the other method; and in the one case, as in the other,—“Who shall touch His hand, or say unto Him—what doest Thou?”

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

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OLDEST DIVINE NAMES IN GENESIS, EL OLAM, EL SHADDAI, EL ELIOUN.

OTHER HEBREW WORDS OF DURATION.

THE DIVINE NAMES IN GENESIS CONNECTED WITH THE THREE ASPECTS OF THE WORLD.—SPACE, TIME, DEGREE.—POWER, PROVIDENCE, GLORY.—PRIMITIVE SIMPLICITY FAVORABLE TO DEVOUT ELEVATION OF THOUGHT.—OTHER HEBREW WORDS OF TIME.—HELED.—TOLEDA OR RACE—DOR OR GENERATION.—ANCIENT CYCLICAL IDEAS.—ARISTOTLE AND ST. JAMES.

FROM the word we have been so fully examining comes one of the oldest of the Divine Names. We have  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי עוֹלָם}$ , El Olam, The Eternal God. It occurs in Genesis in striking connection with two others, and the three together strongly suggest what we have called the three great aspects of the world. They are  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי שָׁמַיִם}$ , El Shaddai, and  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי עֵלְיוֹן}$ , El Elioun, God Almighty, as it is commonly rendered, and God Most High. El Shaddai is rendered in the LXX, *ἰκανός*, and in the Vulgate, *Deus Sufficiens*. Thus taken, it would naturally be referred to the spatial or more directly physical or dynamical aspect of the world, as El Elioun suggests what we have called the altitudinal idea, or that which takes in ascending orders of being. All these most significant epithets occur in Genesis, (see especially Genesis, xxi, 34, xiv, 19, xvii, 1,) and may be rendered the All Pervading, the All Transcending, The Eternal God,—*Κράτιστος*—*Ἐψίστος*—*Αἰώνιος*—representative of space, height, eternity—power, providence, glory. Is it said that such



conceptions are beyond that simple primitive age, we might take issue on the main assertion, or waiving that, might contend that the Bible was given for all ages—that even its earliest parts contain the germs of ideas which all the progress of the human race can never fully develope, much less render obsolete. There is, indeed, a contrast between these most suggestive epithets and what some would call the anthropomorphism of Genesis, yet not a contrast of inconsistency. The same feeling which represents God as coming down to talk with the children of men, and see “how they are doing,” (Genesis, xi, 6,) does also draw out the soul to think on the greatness of such a condescending heavenly friend. This must have been peculiarly the case with those whom Paul describes as feeling that “they were pilgrims and sojourners upon earth, and who sought a city which had foundations.” With these primitive men, the most finite, the most transient deeds of earth, are connected with the thoughts of the eternal and the infinite. “And Abraham planted a grove in Beer Sheba, and he called upon the name Jehovah El Olam, the Lord, the Eternal God.”

These names came from no philosophical speculation, but from the very sense of the human weakness and finity. The true consciousness of lowliness gives by contrast the highest view of Deity. This is the enigma of the Bible, which philosophy, in its pride, cannot comprehend. If one term of the contrast be wanting, it loses all its emotional or moral nature. Hence, with the mere man of science, the Divine Idea presents only a mathematical or numerical greatness,—in other words, a naked and cold abstraction. To the former state of soul, lowliness and loftiness suggest each other, and the apparent

anthropopathism is grounded on the purest faith expressing itself in such language as we find in the old 90th Psalm, —

“From age to age, Eternal God,  
Thou art our Rest, our sure Abode.”

The thought comes directly from the consideration of our desolate orphanage, or the lonely condition of rational man regarded as a mere child of nature, so very different from her other offspring, and yet so very poor if he have no other portion than nature can afford him. Our transient pilgrim state renders inexpressibly precious the idea of the Divine permanence. The more lowly the valley from which we gaze upward, the loftier and more serene appear the heavens; so, also, the very lowliness of our earthly condition may give a grandeur, and an elevation to the conception of Deity which no science or philosophy could ever impart.

“From sin and dust to Thee we cry,  
The Great, the Holy, and the High.”

“Art Thou not from everlasting, O Lord, my God, my Holy One? We shall not die.”\* Take all philosophy from Plato to Cousin, and where do we find any ideas of God more elevated than those that are associated with these grand epithets so frequent in the Old Testament, and most frequent in its oldest parts? What is there which carries us farther towards the infinite in all directions? And yet, it should be observed, with what unshrinking boldness the Bible writers connect with them the ideas of the local and the finite. This is, in fact, one chief peculiarity of the Scriptures. The Divine Being is very near, and yet very far off. The God of

\* Habakkuk, i 12.

the universe is at the same time regarded as a patrial Deity, the "God of his people." He who "fills heaven and earth," is spoken of as dwelling in consecrated localities. The Governor of all worlds in time and space, the Most High, the Almighty, the Everlasting, is at the same time the God of Mamre, of Bethel, of Peniel. El Olam, El Shaddai, El Elioun, is at the same time El Elohe Israel.

There are a few other chronological terms in the Hebrew to which we would devote a brief space, so far as they may be regarded as of a kindred nature with *olam*, or employed for the larger periods. Some of them may be viewed as denoting *states* of being rather than times, or some peculiar character of such states aside from the idea of duration. Thus the word הֶלֶד (heled) is used for time regarded as fleeting and transient, without reference to any notion of extent. Hence, from this flowing idea, or character of transitoriness, it is put for this present life, to denote its frailty; and so it comes to be used for the world, or human life in this particular aspect. The reader is referred to Psalms, xxxix, 6, lxxxix, 48, xlix, 2, Job, xi, 17, and especially to Psalm xvii, 14, where "*men of heled*" is very well rendered "*men of the world.*" Their state is put in contrast with the security of those who abide in the Divine Tabernacle. There is something of the same use of the Greek κόσμος in the New Testament; as 1 Corinthians, vii, 31,—"*The fashion of the world passeth away.*" Compare, also, 1 John, ii, 17.

Another time word is דּוֹרָה, or *generation*, which has already been considered in its radical significance of *nature*, or *birth*. It has, also, a time sense like the

Greek γενεά, and our word generation. Thus taken, it may be also used like *olam* and αἰών, to denote the thing itself, or the being of that of which it expresses the nature or duration. As in Genesis, ii, 4, "The generations of the heavens and the earth," are nearly equivalent to the heavens and earth themselves, or the worlds created. So close is the resemblance, that the Hebrew word would be no bad translation of the Greek rendered ages or *worlds*, Hebrews, xi, 3; and it may be, that in this, as well as in Hebrews, i, 2, the New Testament writer had in view this very language of Moses wherein he calls creation *generations, births, or ages*.

One of our best philologists\* regards the Saxon *ylde*, *yldeu*, as the same with the Hebrew יולידה, from the Semitic root YLD, Arabic WLD. Like the Hebrew, it signifies, not only birth, or generation, but also a period of time, *age, aetas, seculum, aevum*. Hence the English *eald, eld, old*, and the German *alt*. Thus, in Saxon, as well as in the Hebrew, the "generations or the genesis of the heavens and the earth," as we have it in Genesis, ii, 4, would be "the ages of the heavens and the earth." Through whatever route we travel up with these old roots, we find them terminating in the same early conceptions. And so in the Gothic version of Ulfilas we find this same Saxon root used for ages, and to express eternity,—*in aldins aive*, 1 Timothy, i, 17.

Another and still more common word for generation, is the Hebrew, דור, *dor*. It is less than *olam*, though still used for indefinite periods exceeding ordinary solar movements, or common multiples of them. It is the term of measurement of the life-time of the human *race*,

\* Bosworth, author of the Anglo Saxon Dictionary.

as solar years measure the individual life, and olams, on the other hand, are in like manner applied to the duration of the divine kingdom. A striking passage to show the difference is Ecclesiastes, i, 3,—“*Generation cometh and generation goeth, but the earth abideth* ܠܝܘܠܝܢ, *for its olam.*” The word, however, is sometimes used to denote a greater flow of duration, and thus approaches the meaning of olam. It is in this manner applied to God’s existence\* in those affecting passages where it is put in contrast with the frail and transient condition of our earthly human life. To make this contrast more effective, the lesser term generation is used instead of the greater term olam, which would carry the comparison too far off. Thus, Psalms, cii, 24,—“*But thy years are through all generations*” —*dor dorim*, or generations of generations. In the Syriac this compound phrase has become one word, *dor-dorin*, and thus constructed is more commonly used as one of the immeasurable units of duration. In this word, the cyclical idea is very prominent. The root signifies to go round in a circle, *circumire*. This it has, also, in the cognate tongues. Hence, the Arabic word for *time, long time, seculum, age, perpetuity*. Hence, also, perhaps, the Greek, *δηρόν*.

There is the same idea in the Hebrew-Syriac word for morning, (ܘܦܪܐܢ,) which is from a root having the same primary sense, *gyrare, in orbem ire*. The morning is that which comes again in its cyclical *revelation*. Hence the exceeding beauty of that passage, Lamentations, iii,

\* So, also, *γενεὰ* is used with *αἰών*, to denote the greater periods, Ephesians, iii, 21; *εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεὰς τοῦ αἰῶνος τῶν αἰῶνων*,—“*For all the generations of the world of worlds.*” Compare, also, Colossians, i, 26.

23,—“Thy mercies are new every morning,” or, as the Syriac version renders it,—“in the renewal of the morning great is thy faithfulness.” There may be no great critical importance in such terms taken singly; but they show how extensively this periodical idea prevails in all the Hebrew words of time, and that those, therefore, who regard such periodicity as the essential idea of yom in Genesis adopt a mode of interpretation the most in harmony with the whole genius of the Sacred Language.

This cyclical tendency, or mode of conceiving the movements of nature, of all natures whether great or small, as taking place in a circle, or revolution, is certainly a marked feature of the ancient mind. Many and apposite illustrations could be given from the Greek poets. In a fragment of one of his tragedies, Euripides styles nature *ῥόμβος*, a whirl or *rhomb*. Is it, fanciful to trace the same thought in the wheel, and wheels within wheels, of Ezekiel’s glorious vision? Such cyclical ideas may have come from the optical appearance of the rolling world in space, and some have interpreted Ezekiel’s concentric and bisecting orbs (chapter i, 17), or his “wheel within a wheel,” of the armillary sphere represented by the crossing of the great meridional and equatorial circles. But the ideas are harmonious, and we may regard the space and time views as both mingled in the same conception, and as coming from observations, or a priori suggestions equally natural and obvious. The time revolutions of nature in the days, the moons, the years, and in the returns of similar celestial phenomena in the greater astronomical cycles, would call out the periodical belief as well as the observed orbits in space.

This great feature in the larger nature once noted, there would be a tendency to seek for it in the lesser organizations. It would be assumed to exist though hidden from immediate or optical observation. Or it might even be regarded as a sort of a priori belief coming directly from the very idea of a nature as something which reproduces itself, and, therefore, must go round in a circle. Hence the reason would find such cycles, or think it found them, where the sense cannot go. In this way we account for the same cyclical language in respect to the human organization, or man regarded as a sort of micro-cosm, or kosmos in miniature. This was long before science had actually dissected him, and found the wondrous *periods* that are now known to exist in the human system. The human kosmos, too, had its cycles, or wheels of revolution, and to this idea must we refer those singular metaphors we find, Ecclesiastes, xii, 6, 7, of the "silver cord," and "the wheel broken at the cistern." Some might almost think that Koheleth had a knowledge of the spinal marrow, and of the circulation of the blood. Without, however, regarding him as having thus anticipated Harvey's great discovery, sober criticism will at least allow us to refer it to this ancient idea of a periodical revolution, or revolutions, of some kind, in the human system,—an idea not coming from observation, or experience, so much as from this universal analogy.

To this may be referred the *τροχὸς τῆς γενέσεως* of James, iii, 6, "the course of nature," as it has been rendered, or literally, "the wheel of generation." Dr. Adam Clarke's opinion that it refers to "the penal wheel of the Greeks," is without the shadow of authority. The

best aid to the interpretation of James, iii, 6, may be found in Aristotle's *Physica*, where the origin of the language, and the philosophy of it are thus set forth,—“It is because,” he says, “of the accustomed mode of speech; for men are wont to say that all human things are a circle, κύκλον τινά, and in the same way they speak of all things that have a physical genesis. The reason of this is, that all things are *measured by time*, and have their beginnings and their end, as it were, in a period; *for time itself seems to be a wheel or cycle.*” *Aristot. Phys. Ausc. Lib. iv, 14, 5.*

It is this idea, and this kind of language in the old philosophers, which gives them, in some of their physical speculations, the appearance of having anticipated certain discoveries of modern science. It is, however, only this vaticinating a priori conception which before observation, and without observation, expects to find order and harmony in nature, or a regular course of events whose mutual interdependences and reproductions find their best outward expression in such idea.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

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### HEBREW IDEAS OF NATURAL LAW.

IDEA OF LAW IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.—ILLUSTRATIONS FROM JOB, THE PSALMS, AND THE PROPHETS.—SUPPOSED IGNORANCE OF BIBLE WRITERS.—THE "FOUNDATIONS OF THE EARTH."—THE POETICAL AS DISTINGUISHED FROM THE PHENOMENAL STYLE.—COMPARISON OF THE MOSAIC ACCOUNT WITH JOB, XXXVIII, AND ITS SUBLIME INTERROGATORIES.—HAS SCIENCE YET ANSWERED THEM?

IT may seem a bold assertion, and yet we will hazard it, that no where do we find the ideas of law and order more distinctly set forth than in the Old Testament. We mean natural law and order. It is, indeed, never parted from the Divine Personality, but it is true law notwithstanding. It may not be scientifically known in its linked details, yet still there is the unmistakable recognition of an *order of things*, settled, firm, and universal. Long before the name of the Newtonian gravitation was even heard of, the Psalmist had said,—“For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in the heavens;” “all things stand according to thine ordinances.” “He maketh peace,” says the author of the Book of Job, “*peace* in his high places,”—“*concordiam in sublimibus suis*. The Hebrew  $\text{שָׁלוֹם}$ , denotes *perfection* and *integrity*, but in its most usual sense of peace, what is it, as used in such connection, but another name for order, fitness, attraction, agreement, constancy, and law?

He maketh “*concord in sublimibus suis*”—among the heavenly hosts or orbs. There may be found, also, the same idea in respect to the lower departments of

nature. We quote again from the same rich store-house of ancient wisdom, that grand old Book of Job,—“When He appointed its weight for the winds, when He regulated the waters by measure, when He made a law for the rain, and a way for the flashes of the thunder voice,”—or, as quaint old Tyndale has it, “When He sett the rayne in order and gave the mightie floudes a lawe.” We have alluded before to the name of *covenant* as being sometimes given to God’s methods of proceeding in the natural worlds; as in Jeremiah, xxxiii, 19, there is mention of his “covenant of the day and his covenant of the night.” It is applied there to inanimate things; but this is just the transfer we make of our word law from rational and moral to physical agencies. Thus the idea of law, of natural law, is clearly in the Bible; but it never sinks into that inane conception of a law without a lawgiver. Neither does it ever lose its essential idea of ordinance or decree.

There is often a great deal of shallow criticism on the erroneous conceptions of the Bible writers respecting “the foundations of the earth,” and their “extreme ignorance of its true form.” But aside from the poetical explanation, it is not true that they were thus ignorant. It might be shown, and we have shown elsewhere, that the idea of the earth’s roundness was a very ancient one. It would come most naturally to the mind of every thinking man, who saw the sun go down in the west and rise again in the east, that the earth must rest in space with space all round and round it in every direction. So far it would be almost a matter for the senses. Hence nothing could be more natural than the idea expressed in Job, xxvi, 7, and in which all the old versions concur,—

“He stretcheth out the North over the empty space,”—evidently referring to the north pole of the visible world which seems to stand over a void,—“and hangeth the earth upon nothing,”—*Qui extendit aquilonem super vacuum, et appendit terram super nihilum.* But in respect to the real “foundations of the earth,” the Bible holds a truer language than science itself. The ultimate foundations, or supports, of the earth are God’s upholding power. We may smile at the old quackish story of the earth’s standing on the back of the elephant, and the elephant standing on the head of the tortoise, etc., etc., but in our gravities, our magnetisms, our series of fluids ever requiring other fluids to explain their motions, we have only introduced a new set of modern equivalents. They may be very convenient as terms denoting sequences of phenomena; but they come no nearer to the primal fact than the wildest Hindoo or Scandinavian myth. And yet the earth has a supporting power, though science by her groping may never get down to it.

“Earth with its caverns dark and deep,  
Lies in His mighty hand.”

Why is Watts so sublime here? It is because he so closely follows the inspired thought and language. “In His hand are all the deep places of the earth and the strength\* of the hills is His also.”

“’Tis by Thy strength the mountains stand.”

What can geology give us for such ideas as these? How will its dry technics of strata and formations make to us any compensation for the loss of the Scriptural concep-

\* The Hebrew word here denotes the strength required to bear up the heaviest loads,—from a root signifying to be weary. It is here applied anthropopathically to Deity.

tions? There is no desire to underrate the language of science, but to exchange our Bible for it—we mean now not simply its moral views, but its grand physical teachings in respect to the origin and sustaining power of the world—would be, indeed, like preferring the chaff to the wheat, the dry bones to the breath of life. We might as well take a *dx-dy* computation in dynamical astronomy as a substitute for the glorious old heavens themselves. But this is all a play upon words, our scientific lecturer may say. It is not what *we* mean when we speak of the foundations of the earth, and the ancient ignorance respecting them. Neither, on the other hand, may it be replied, does the Bible mean what you, in your little science, and still less Biblical learning, would ascribe to it. Your stale caricatures belong neither to its prose nor its poetry. They are alike alien to its letter and its spirit.

In one of the earliest chapters of this work, there was an allusion to the distinction between phenomenal and poetical language, and a promise of further explanation. The Mosaic account, it was said, was simple prose. Wherein, then, does the poetical style differ from it? We will endeavor to answer briefly. Phenomenal language, which exists almost every where, even in the roots of scientific and philosophical terms, is simply making use of those phenomena which come primarily and directly from the sense without any effort of the imagination. It is the employing of first appearances for the construction of the first names. They may be called the inner language or vehicle of the thought, and are designed only for clearness of idea and vividness of impression. In poetry, on the other hand, the object is strong emotion.

in connection with the thought. The design in the one case is knowledge, in the other feeling. Hence poetry does not necessarily take the primary images which the sense at once presents, but goes in search of others that may be in some measure hidden (until brought out by the active imagination) and employs them for this further purpose. The imagery in the beginning of Genesis is all of the first kind,—“such as the *dividings*, the *gatherings* of the waters, the *spreading* out of the firmament, the *birth* of plants, or their *out-goings* from the earth. These appearances are all actually in nature, not made nor imagined. But poetry is not content with this. She *makes* her images, as her name (*ποίησις*) implies. She brings us, too, not mere single images, but compound similes both express and implied. She deals not merely in direct resemblances, but also in analogies. Poetry compares creation to the building of a temple, or the erection of a tabernacle, and hence the imagination selects other pictures that may suit the chosen comparison. To this end it has its walls, its curtains, its gates, its foundations, its corner stones. It is not difficult to distinguish the two styles, even where there is no outward dress of verse or rhythm; but in order to make it more clear, let us examine the Thirty-eighth Chapter of Job, which may almost be called a poetical parallel to the prose of the Mosaic account.

The First of Genesis is evidently in view, and some marks of its order may be traced. God is represented as speaking out of the thunder cloud, and challenging Job's ignorance in a series of questions clothed in the highest garb of poetry—such poetry as we find nowhere else in all the remains of classical antiquity. “Where

wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Who appointed its measures? Who stretched the line upon it? Upon what are its sockets sunk? Who hath laid the corner stone thereof?" Here the imagination is directed to the building of a temple; and then there is brought in that other poetical imagery, than which nothing can be conceived more glorious, or more animating, although drawn from one of the customs of the earth: "When the Stars of the Morning sang together, and all the Sons of God shouted for joy." Our view in respect to these Stars of the World's earliest morning has been already given. The metaphor itself is derived from the songs and processions which in all ages have been used at the commencement, or laying the corner stone of great public buildings. As in Zachariah, iv, 7,—“They shall bring forth the corner-stone with shoutings, grace, grace, unto it;” or, Ezra, iii, 10, where it is said, “They laid the foundations of the temple of the Lord, and the priests stood with their trumpets, and the Sons of Asaph with their loud sounding cymbals, and all the people sang aloud in great triumph, and the voice was heard afar.” And so the Hosts of Heaven tone jubilee when earth's corner-stone was laid. Those eldest born of creation, the Sons of the Morning, are out upon their early watch for the dawning of that glorious first day of earth, or the beginning of this new temple in which there are to be such rich displays of the divine glory. But we would not spoil the picture by dwelling upon it, or attempting to paint it. Nothing can surpass its grandeur and its beauty as it stands upon the pages of the Bible.

But let us proceed with our interpretation of the poetical imagery in Job, xxxviii,—“Who shut up the

sea with doors when it rushed forth and came out of the womb? When I made the cloud its garment, and the *haraphel*, or thickest darkness, its swathing band.”\* Birth or generation simply is a conception that belongs to sober prose. It is, as we have seen, at the root of the most philosophical language in its application to natural growth and organization. Nature is always a *coming forth* of one thing from another. But here, to bring up again the remark made in the beginning of this criticism, the poetical imagination goes beyond this primary conception which may enter into prose, even the prose of science and philosophy. It goes beyond it, and selects others which are purely imaginative or poetical. Here we have not only the birth, the genesis, the out-going, but the first raiment of the offspring, the cloud and its swathing band the thick darkness of the primeval chaos, in which it was nursed until it could bear the light, and its fluids were converted into solids, and its granite bones were formed, and it thus grew into an abode for vegetable, and animal, and rational life.

“When I brake upon it my decree, and put bars and doors, and said, hitherto shalt thou come and no farther, and here shalt thou stop in the proud swelling of thy waves.” Here, again, is the same difference between the simple phenomenal and the poetical. There is a going out of the imagination in search of images, and so again it finds its bars, and doors, and locks, and bolts. The expression, “*I brake upon it my decree*,” is peculiar in its boldness. This very pictorial poetry has most graphic-

\* What an image here of power! The mighty earth itself is robed in its swathing garments, as the nurse turns and handles the infant on her lap.

ally presented the image by inverting it, as we may say, on the retina of the mind's eye. The ocean breaks against the barrier of the Almighty, and this is painted as though its impetuosity were anticipated, and the law, or bound, were suddenly made to breast or break its raging waters.

“Hast thou commanded the morning from thy days? Hast thou made the dawn to know its place? It is turned as clay to the seal, and they stand forth as a garment.” This verse, especially the latter part of it, is somewhat difficult in a critical point of view, but its general sense is obvious, and any one can see that it is of the highest order of poetry. As the seal gives form, and distinctness, and meaning, to the chaotic or formless clay, and may thus be said to create its images, so is the effect of light upon nature.\* It may almost be said, to make a new creation every time the “east,” to use the language in Job, “spreads it over the earth,” and in this sense, may it may be truly affirmed, of God's works and ways,—“Thy mercies *are new every morning*, great is thy faithfulness,”—thy law-abiding covenant faithfulness, even in the natural as well as in the spiritual world.

It has been said that modern natural science has answered the animated interrogatories with which this chapter abounds. It has been boldly affirmed that they would not now be asked.† We know, it is boastingly

\* From some such idea, perhaps, comes the Rabbinical and Arabic word for *nature*, as derived from the root טבע, to *immerse, stamp, imprint*. *Nature* is the visible manifestation of the invisible types or ideas.

† The smattering lecturer may talk of science having “rendered obsolete the language of the Bible,” but it required the far deeper science, and deeper philosophy of a Humboldt



said, on what "the earth rests," or rather, that it rests on nothing. We know what assigned its ancient bound to the waters. We know "whence light cometh;" we "have taken it to its bound," and have "explored the path to its house." It can no longer be asked as a doubtful question: "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, and hast thou seen the store houses of the hail?" But is it so? Is not all this boasting as false as it is irreverent? Science has taken many a step of progress; she has explored phenomenon after phenomenon, but has she really arrived at those ultimate truths to which all these questions point? Is she really any nearer to them than in the days of Job; or is she not still on the outside in respect to the ineffable facts, or first workings of nature, that this sublime challenge has preeminently in view? Does she truly "know where light dwelleth? Can she even explain one of its most common phenomena? Take a question which presents itself in almost everything we see. What is color? Or rather, what constitutes it, and makes it what it is? Why is this object red, and that one yellow or green? Because this reflects the red rays, it is sagely said, and that the green. But the question is not answered, or only comes up again in a new shape. Why the difference of reflection? The mystery is but a few inches from our hands and eyes. The true reason must be very near the surface. But there it lies as unknown to us as it was to Abraham or

to observe, "that, though in the present state of our physical knowledge, many of these questions, propounded to Job, may be expressed under more scientific definitions, yet it can scarcely be said that we can answer them more satisfactorily." Humboldt's *Kosmos*, vol. ii, p. 57.

Job. Science can only affirm that it is something in the figure, site, order, or affinities of the particles, in consequence of which the light is reflected to us in a certain manner producing a certain sensation. But Aristotle could say all that, and has said it very well. The Schoolmen could say all that. We have split up the ray of light; we have polarized it; we have measured all its angles of refraction. But we are still on the outside in respect to its interior law, even as concerned in its most common manifestations.

Again,—Has science truly “entered into the treasures of the rain, or seen the store-houses of the hail?” She has undoubtedly connected many links unknown to the meteorology of Job’s day. She has analyzed a drop of water, and decomposed it into its apparent elemental parts, thus splitting a fact in two, or getting two questions instead of one; but has she found out what makes it a drop, in other words, what constitutes fluidity, or what is its law in distinction from the phenomena which it presents. Here is another fact, a fact which may be very far from an ultimate one, a fact which might seem to lie very near the surface of things, a fact science has tried very hard to explain, but which has, as yet, baffled all our keenest investigations. We talk much of fluids; the word is the grand solvent for every imagined mystery; but its own mystery, the mystery of fluidity in its most obvious form, we cannot solve. Is any dark act of nature, or spirit even, to be explained, it is all owing to a fluid, or fluids, of some kind, magnetic, electric, or vitalic; and some think that when they have said this, they have gone to the very *bottom* of the matter. But what is a fluid, or fluidity? What is the fluidity even

of water? Here, again, we may be greeted with the wise answer,—It is some disposition of the particles; or it is connected with a certain temperature. But we are yet in the phenomenal. Caloric, as the designation of a fluid-making power, is but a name for the fact to be accounted for; diminution of cohesion is but another. When we attempt to conceive of the possible internal constitution by which the effect is produced, we are baffled on every side. It cannot be dependent on the sparseness of the particles; for many light bodies are solid, whilst heavier and more dense ones are fluid. The particles of quicksilver must be much nearer together than those of chalk. The reason cannot lie in their shape; for the same apparent substance changes from a liquid to a solid, or from a solid to a liquid; and it cannot be supposed that in such cases there is a change in the very figure of the particles themselves. We have left only the vague word relation, but we cannot tell what the relation is. Aristotle could have brought it under this category, as well as Sir Humphrey Davy. It is a certain relation of the particles to each other; and so we leave the matter just where we found it, and where it has rested since the earliest philosophising.

Has science, then, really answered these questions? We must keep in view the spirit of this sublime challenge as meant not only for the days of Job, but for all ages. The language is the language of that day, but the ultimate facts it presents no science has yet explored. Take two substances, as near together as the snow-flake and the drop of water. Twin children of nature that they are, and evermore changing the one into the other, yet all the chemistry of the age, with all the new chemico-

spiritual light which is professing to look into the very interior constitution of things, cannot assign that internal cause which makes their difference or their identity. "By the breath of the Lord frost is given." Most readers are doubtless familiar with that remarkable appearance that snow-flakes and crystals of frost present under the microscope, and sometimes to the naked eye,—wheels within wheels, orbs concentric and eccentric, radii, sectors, lunes, and polygons, presenting figures and angles of every kind, and which the highest magnifying power only exhibits in a still higher perfection. What is yet more wonderful, all these beautiful forms come by a very rapid process from the chaotic vapor of the clouds, or from formless drops so strangely transformed into other and far different *appearances*. This change, the Bible says, is "by the word of the Lord which runneth very swiftly," Psalms, cxlvii, 15. Again, in Job, it is called the spirit or breath of the Lord,—“By the breath of the Lord frost is given.” Such language may seem very simple, and very primitive to some of our scientific conventions; but what can they put in its place that makes any approach to the wondrous secret. Crystallization is the magic word. It is, indeed, a beautiful term, beautiful, too, because it is so strictly phenomenal, that is, a name for appearances, but it certainly furnishes no explanation of the phenomena themselves. Science knows no more of the hidden power at work among these particles of vapor than of what is going on in the mysterious nebula of Orion. It is from the same *breath*, too, come apparently the most opposite results,—“*hail stones and coals, or flames, of fire.*” How far have our naturalists penetrated into this interior laboratory of nature, where

the hail and the lightning are generated together,—this “secret place of the thunder,” to use one of the sublime expressions by which the inspired Lyrist designates God’s concealed residence amid the powers of the natural world.

But let us not underrate our real obligations to science. She cannot answer, it is true, this wondrous challenge of the patriarchal book, but to every one who thinks aright she has given it, perhaps, a deeper interest than it could have possessed in the days of Job. Instead of science superseding these remarkable interrogatories, it is through her lens we are enabled to see farther into their infinitude. The higher its magnifying power, the more does it reveal to us that these depths are, indeed, unfathomable. In this sense, our highest physical knowledge has not yet “entered into the secret treasures of the snow,” or seen the concealed “store houses of the hail.” Much less does it “know where light dwelleth,” or “on what are laid the foundations of the earth.” The business of science is, after all, and ever will be, with phenomena. She has, therefore, no right to demand that revelation should have employed her ever defective language. We might with more reason insist, that instead of the Hebrew and the Greek which the Divine Wisdom has selected, the Bible should have been written in the style of each age, and in every man’s own vernacular tongue.















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